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OR
Body of Divinity.

The Second VOLUME.

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BOOK V.

17/12

Of the PRECEPTS of the NEW COVENANT.

CHAP. I.

Of the Precepts of God in general.

Hitherto we have treated of the Method where-
by God has decreed to bestow Salvation on *The Wor-*
Men through his Son *Jesús Christ*, from *ship of God*
whence the Usefulness and Necessity of our
Duty does appear. We shall in the next place enquire
more distinctly into the Nature of the Covenant,
which God was pleased to make by his Son with Man-
kind agreeably to his Decree. This Covenant consists
of two Parts: First, The Stipulation of a Duty on
Man's side: And Secondly, The Promise of Salvation
to such as perform their Duty, and the threatning of
Punishment and Eternal Death to those who neglect it.
In the Duty of Man there are two Things considerable,
(1.) Its Rule, and (2.) The Duty or Worship it self.
The Rule of our Duty is likewise either *External*, viz.
The Divine Precepts; or else *Internal*, our own Consci-
ence. The former is the Primary, general, remote
and always exact Rule; the latter is the secondary,
special, and proximate Rule, which is no farther right,
than as it suits with, and is directed by the other.

The *Primary Rule* then of our Duty are the *Precepts*
of God, whereby he declares his Will, and signifies *Divine*
what he would have done by us, in order to our par- *Precepts,*
taking *which are*

1. *Either
of Natural
or Positive
Right.*

taking of the Benefits contained in the New Covenant. And these Precepts admit of several Distinctions.

1. As first some are of *Natural*, others of *Positive Right*. First the *Natural Right* of God is that which is founded in his very Nature, and requires that only such things should be commanded to reasonable Creatures, as are agreeable to the Divine Nature, and to the Reason implanted in Creatures; and such things be forbidden as are repugnant thereto; so that God cannot without denying himself, and offering Violence to our Reason, command the contrary. Now the Law of God founded on this *Natural Right*, is either, (1) *Natural*, strictly so taken, which God implanted in Man at the first Creation, and still preserves to us; and is nothing else but right Reason, which dictates to us what is virtuous and honourable, what is vicious and dishonourable; what we ought to do, what we should not do; and this with so powerful an Obligation, as to pronounce them who do otherwise worthy of Death*: Or, (2.) *Reveal'd and Moral*, which being deriv'd from the Law of Nature, God has reveal'd to some Men; which is indeed the same with the *Natural Law*, yet in some Instances is more perfect than it. Secondly, the *Positive Right* of God is that which depends on his mere good Will and Pleasure, so that by it he may prescribe to Men not only other Precepts besides what he has prescribed them, but even such as are contrary thereto: and among these such only are to be reckoned as good, which God commands, and as long as he commands them; and those to be unlawful and evil which God prohibits; tho' right Reason dictates no such thing, nor can we discern any cause why God commands it: The Will of God being in this case the Rule of Right or Wrong. This *Positive Right* takes place in *Ceremonies*, and other external Precepts, which may be varied from time to time according to the good Pleasure of God. But the Case is not the same with respect to the *Natural Law*; which being founded on the immutable Nature of God, and on right Reason, he can never alter, nor absolve Men from the

* Rom. i. 32.

Obligation of observing it; much less can he abrogate it by the Prescription of contrary Precepts. They therefore are egregiously mistaken, who maintain, That God can command things contrary, not only to his other Precepts, but even to the Decalogue it self; and in such a case those things would become good and necessary; such for Instance, as the worshipping of Idols and Devils, the hating and denying of God, blaspheming his Name, with the like: For 'tis impossible, that God should implant Reason in Man, and at the same time command him such things as his Reason condemns as vicious and wicked, and wherein there is not the least shew of Probity or Goodness.

2. The Divine Precepts are either, (1.) *Affirmative*, wherein God commands something to be done: Or, (2.) *Negative*, by which he forbids the doing of some things, and charges us to avoid and omit them. Between these two there is this Difference, the *Affirmative* are always obligatory, whenever there is an occasion of performing them, and always require a Mind ready to obey them; but if there be no occasion of performing them, in that case the Obligation ceases: The *Negative* are binding upon all Men, in every Place, and at all times; for what God has forbidden is lawful for no Man to do, nor is he at any time or place absolved of his Obligation to it.

(3.) Another Distinction of the Divine Precepts is into *General* and *Particular* ones. The *General* neither command nor forbid some certain Actions, but are only general Rules, wherein are included the more *Particular* Precepts commanding or forbidding such and such Actions. Of this nature are those two General Precepts, of loving God and our Neighbour, wherein are contained all the particular Commands of the Decalogue*; and those three of Sobriety, Righteousness and Godliness, under which the Apostle comprehends the whole Duty of a Christian†.

For the right Explication, and due Understanding of the Precepts, these Rules are to be observed: (1.) That under the *Negative* Precepts, their Contraries

2. Either
Affirmative
or
Negative.

3. Either
General or
Particular.

Rules to be
observed
for the
right Ex-
plication
of the Di-
vine Pre-
cepts.

* Mat. 22. 37. † Tit. 2. 12.

the *Affirmative* are comprehended ; for God requires not only that we should eschew Evil, but likewise that we should do Good. (2.) When some *External* Acts are either commanded or forbidden, in them are very frequently included the *Internal* Acts of the Mind, from whence the External proceed. (3.) Under the *General* Acts are comprehended the *Particular* ones, and all of the same kind and nature ; some more manifest, others less discernable by us. (4.) And lastly, if two Precepts cannot be observed at one and the same time, then we ought to consider which is the most preferable ; the Precepts of the first Table being to be obeyed rather than those of the second *, when both of them cannot be observed ; and the *Moral* to take place of the *Ceremonial* Injunctions †.

C H A P. II.

Of Conscience, the Internal Rule of our Actions.

*Conscience
defin'd,
and its
threefold
Office.*

THE *Internal* Rule of our Actions is CONSCIENCE, which we define thus ; *It is an Act of the Practical Judgment, whereby a Man passes Sentence upon his own Actions, and either approves or condemns them.* But whereas 'tis employed in judging of our Actions, either as future, present or past, hence it is that a threefold Office is assigned unto it. (1.) It lays before us what we ought to do, and in this Respect it is called a *Light*, directing a Man ; or rather a *Law*, dictating and commanding what must be done. (2.) By the help of Memory it bears Testimony to the Actions which a Man does agreeably or contrary to that Law, and in this Sense it is called a *Witness*. (3.) It pronounces the Sentence either of Absolution or Condemnation, according to the Quality of the Actions, and upon this Account it is called a *Judge*.

* Luke 14. 16. † Hof. 6. 6.

From hence it is plain, that Conscience is not the Supreme but Subordinate Rule of our Actions, since it has a Law superior to it, by which as its Rule it is directed, viz. the Law of God, whether Natural or Reveal'd. Now the more perfect that Law is, the more perfect is the Judgment of the Conscience, which is passed according to that Law; and on the contrary, the more imperfect the one is, the more imperfect will the other be. But tho' the Divine Law be the supreme Rule of our Actions, yet it cannot prevail upon us to obey, nor be applied to our Actions without the Intervention of our Conscience, which being convinced of the meaning of the Law, applies it to all and every Action; for a Law unknown cannot incline us to Obedience, and it prevails upon us only so far as it is known, and consequently only so far as the Conscience is endued with the Knowledge thereof.

But for a clearer Apprehension of the Obligation of the several Conscience, 'tis to be noted, that Conscience may be considered either with respect to its Rule, or with respect to the Actions of which it judges. With respect to its Rule, 'tis either a *Right* Conscience, when 'tis conformable to the Divine and Evangelical Law; or *Erroneous*, when it swerves from that Law, or mistakes the true and genuine Sense of it; or *Doubtful*, when it is uncertain about the meaning of the Law, and is at a stand what must, or must not be done. With respect to the Actions on which it passes a Judgment, it is either a *Good* Conscience, which approves and applauds what is done agreeable to the Divine Law; or *Evil*, which condemns what is done contrary to that Law; or *Scrupulous*, which is an anxious Conscience, because 'tis uncertain whether what has been done be agreeable to the Law of God or not, and consequently whether it ought to approve or condemn.

For the attaining a true and right Conscience two things are necessary: (1.) That there be no Defect in the Law, to which as to its Rule it ought to be conformable; for if there should be any Error in the Law, the Conscience to be directed by it must needs be erroneous. (2.) That no mistake be committed in apprehending

prehending the Sense of the Law, but a due Application of it made to our Actions; *i. e.* those things must be reckoned as prohibited which the Law forbids, those necessary which the Laws commands, and those indifferent which it determines on neither side; and consequently the Conscience in all things must be conformable to its Rule. Now to denominate a Man's Conscience conformable to its Rule, on whose Judgment he may safely rely, 'tis not enough that it consent to the Divine Word upon any Reason that shall be offered, but such an Assent must be grounded on some sound and solid Argument: For if it be carried away by mere Opinion, by the Custom and Number of those who assent, or by some plausible Argumentation, not thoroughly weighed and examined, a Man ought not to rely upon the Judgment of such a Conscience, tho' perhaps it may be right; nor does the Action wrought according to such a Judgment deserve the Name of *Virtue*, since 'tis not a *Rational*, but a *blind* and *brutal Act*. Hence it is that *Wisdom* and *Prudence* is so frequently recommended to us in Scripture*, and we are earnestly admonished to take heed how we hear, lest we be deceived.

An erroneous Conscience what.

But if the Conscience is ignorant of the true Sense of the Law, it is *Erroneous*, and makes a wrong Application of the Law to its Actions; and consequently a Man must needs be a Transgressor of the Law. Now this Error may be either in *Faith*, when a Man by false Reasoning and a perverse Interpretation of the Scripture, is led into a false Opinion about some Article of Faith: Or in *Manners*, when a Man is misled from the true understanding of the Divine Precepts; when he believes that to be unlawful which is lawful, or necessary; and on the contrary, that to be necessary or lawful which is unlawful; when he thinks that to be only lawful which is necessary, and that be necessary which is only lawful or indifferent.

A Query answered.

It is usually asked when Conscience is *Erroneous*, what must a Man do in that Case? *Ans.* Whereas we have observed that Conscience is the intimate and

* 1 Cor. 14. 20. Eph. 5. 15, 17.

proximate Rule of our Actions, we must follow its Dictatetho' it should err. Because tho' the Conscience be not right, but is a false Rule, if not conformable to the Word of God; yet 'tis impossible for a Man to live according to God's Word, any farther than his Conscience admits of this Rule: So that Conscience in it self has the Force of the Divine Will, and whatever it prescribes, it prescribes as commanded by God. The Action therefore is esteem'd a Sin not according to the Judgment which God pronounces concerning it in his Word, but according to the Judgment of Conscience. But here we add, that great care ought to be taken to get the Conscience better instructed, that it may agree with its Rule, and that it be none of our fault, if we fall into any Error, which may destroy or shake the Foundation of our Christian Faith and Manners. If we take not this care, let us do what we will we cannot avoid falling into Sin; should we follow the Judgment of our Conscience, we shall commit an Act contrary to the Word of God; and should we not follow it, we shall act what we think to be repugnant to that Word.

Now that the Conscience may not err, particularly in *Matters of Faith*, these Rules are to be observ'd. (1.) In obscure Places of Scripture such a Sense must not be admitted as is repugnant to plainer and clearer Texts. (2.) Nor such a Sense as implies a palpable Absurdity in it self, and cannot be reconcil'd with right Reason. (3.) Nor are two contradictory Meanings to be enquir'd after in Scripture. (4.) Proper Expressions must not be explain'd by figurative ones, but *vice versa*. (5.) Nor must some Scraps be taken out of Scripture without minding the Connexion they have with what goes before and comes after. (6.) All Prejudice and Passion must be laid aside, and no Opinion brought into Scripture, but be deduc'd from it. With respect to Error in point of *Manners*, for the correcting of this, a Man must not be taught to act contrary to his Conscience tho' it errs; for this would be to teach him to throw off all respect and awe for God: But care must be taken to clear his Conscience of that Error, and to inform the Man of the true Sense of God's Word.

How to correct an erroneous Conscience.

Upon

How an
erroneous
Conscience
sins.

Upon the whole matter it must be said, that tho' a Man be obliged to follow the Judgment of even his *Erroneous Conscience*, yet such an one is not free from Sin. For whatever is contrary to God's Word, tho' the Conscience may think otherwise, is a Sin. Since Conscience being only a Secondary Rule, cannot be good, unless it suit with the principal Rule. True it is, he who breaks a Command of which he is convinced in his own Conscience, commits a double Sin, in that he does evil, and acts contrary to his Conscience: But he likewise sins, who violates a Precept, tho' it is not his own fault that he is ignorant of it. An *Erroneous Conscience* may indeed be *secure*, in that it condemns not its own Act; but it cannot be a *good Conscience*, because it swerves from its principal Rule.

Acts 23. 1. But here it may be objected that *St. Paul*, **Acts 23. 1.** *explain'd.* says, that he *had lived before God in all good Conscience until this day*: And yet he had persecuted the Church of God. *Ans.* The Apostle does not here speak of the time which preceded his Conversion, but of that which followed it, as is evident from these plain Reasons. (1.) Because he had no occasion before the *Jewish Council* to clear himself with respect to the Actions he did before his Conversion, since the *Jews* did not charge him upon their account, but rather approved of them: But they accused him of those Actions which followed his Conversion. (2.) If he had meant the time preceding his Conversion, he would have given his Judges just reason to have reply'd, That they also persecuted *Paul* with a good Conscience; since *Theirs* as well as *His* before Conversion told them that the Church of Christ ought to be persecuted. (3.) *St. Paul* reflecting upon the Time that preceded his Conversion, speaks quite otherwise of himself: So far is he from saying that he lived in a good Conscience before God, that he calls himself a *Blasphemer*, a *Persecutor*, the *chief of Sinners* *, *unworthy to be called an Apostle*, because he had persecuted the Church of God †.

It may be further urg'd that the same Apostle says, **2 Tim. 1. 3.** *2 Tim. 1. 3.* that he *served God from his Forefathers explain'd.* with a pure Conscience. *Ans.* This Phrase, ἀπὸ πατρῶ-

* 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. † 1 Cor. 15. 9.

does not necessarily imply, as he had been educated by his Forefathers ; but may denote that he followed the Steps of his Ancestors, viz. the true Believers, so that he does not speak of the Sect of the Pharisees, but of Christianity. (2.) Supposing that the Apostle speaks of his serving God before his Conversion, we say that his Conscience is called *Pure*, because he still retain'd a Love of what was good ; so that his Sin was not malicious, but ignorant. His Conscience then was pure, not absolutely, but in some measure, because it did not condemn what he did ; so that tho' he did what was ill, yet he did it not with an evil Intention.

Another Question may be asked, " Which is the greater Sin, whether to commit any thing contrary to the Divine Precept according to the Judgment of an Erroneous Conscience, or to do that which is contrary to the Dictates of Conscience, but agreeable to the Divine Command ? *Ans.* Generally speaking that is the greater Sin which is committed against Conscience : (1.) Because so far as we follow the Dictates of Conscience, so far may we be said to love Vertue, and hate Vice : But not so, if by chance and through Ignorance we do what is suitable to God's Word. (2.) Because we express the greatest Hatred towards God, if we act contrary to the Dictates of Conscience. But 'tis requisite to make a more distinct Reply. We are therefore to distinguish between the Causes of Ignorance. There is an *Invincible Ignorance*, caus'd in us either for want of Revelation, or of Judgment, and which cannot be conquer'd after all the Care and Industry we can honestly use : This excuses from Sin. But there is an *Ignorance* which is *Vincible*, contracted by our own fault ; and this is more or less culpable, according to the Causes of it. (1.) One sort of it proceeds from mere Prejudice and a Fondness of an Opinion wherein we are educated, without any mixture of Malice, and such was St. Paul's Ignorance before his Conversion : Now tho' this be not altogether faultless, yet we are of opinion, that a less Sin is committed by following the Dictates of such a Conscience, than if we acted contrary to it. (2.) Another sort of Ignorance may arise from Malice, and such

*A Query
answer'd.*

such grievous Sins as render a Man guilty of Eternal Damnation in the sight of God; nay it is possible that a Man may be ignorant of his being immers'd in such Vices, thro' a supine neglect and want of duly examining the State of his Soul, whereas if he had made a diligent Search, he might have discover'd those Sins that lay hid in his Breast. Now in this case we say, that it is a much more grievous Sin, not to get such a wicked Conscience better instructed, and to commit such Enormities, according to the Dictates of it, than it is to abstain from them in opposition to Conscience. For these are such horrid Actions, and so directly repugnant, not only to the reveal'd Will of God, but even to the Law of Nature, that no Man can be so grossly ignorant, without being guilty of the highest Wickedness.

Another
Query an-
swer'd.

Lastly, it is demanded, "What we ought to think
" of the Actions of those Men, whom God has given
" over to a reprobate Mind; whether these are to be
" reckon'd as Sins or not? *Ans.* With respect to
such Men it must be said, either that through the just
Judgment of God for past Offences, they are so far de-
prived of the right use of their Reason, that they can
make no Distinction betwixt Vertue and Vice: or
else that they do know the difference betwixt the one
and the other, but through the Error of their Minds
they esteem that to be vicious which is vertuous, and
that to be vertuous which is vicious. If we understand
them in the first Sense (as several Divines do) then it
must be said, that in such Men so far as they are given
up to a reprobate Mind, there is no Conscience left,
and therefore their Actions, tho' contrary to the Di-
vine Precepts, are not formal or expresse Sins, nor do
they aggravate their Condemnation: The Actions of
such Men are rather like those of savage and wild
Beasts, or of mad and frenzical Men. But if we
suppose that they have still some Notion left of the
difference between Good and Evil; then they have
still a Conscience, tho' a deprav'd and misinform'd
one: And therefore the same is to be said of these, as
was of them whose Conscience is *Erroneous*, and whose
Error proceeds from their own Fault and Wicked-
ness.

When

When the *Conscience is Doubtful*, the *Action* must be suspended, because what is done with a doubting *Conscience* is *Sin*. Thus St. Paul says, *Rom. 14. 23.* That *whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin*. Where by the Word **F A I T H**, he does not mean in the general, *Faith in Jesus Christ*, but that firm Perswasion of Mind, by which any one is perswaded of the Christian Liberty, and knows that what he does is not unlawful, nor prohibited by the Law of God: This Interpretation of the Word *Faith* in that place, appears to be just and reasonable from the whole Context; where he who hath *Faith* is opposed to his weak Brother, not one who was destitute of all Faith, but one who was not as yet fully instructed in all the Parts of the Christian Religion, and consequently doubted of some Points. They are therefore egregiously mistaken, who from this Text infer, that all the Works of Men before they believe in Jesus Christ are Sins, since the Apostle does not here treat of such Men; but only of those who act without a firm Perswasion of the Lawfulness of what they do, and this he says is Sin. The Reason is, because whoever does any thing with a doubting Conscience, has not that Reverence for God which he ought, especially if it were in his Power to omit or suspend that Act: For he who doubts whether what he does be agreeable to the Will of God, puts himself into a manifest Danger of doing that which God has forbidden, which is far from being the Character of one who fears God; and to do any thing with a doubting Conscience, is next door to acting against Conscience.

But to be more particular; 'tis to be noted, that *Some cases* this Doubt or Scruple of Conscience may be either with respect to one or both sides of the Question in dispute. With respect to the former, a Man may doubt, not whether it be lawful to omit, but to do such or such a thing; or he may question, not whether it be lawful to do, but to omit it: In both these cases the safest way is to take that side on which there lies no doubt. But if the Scruple is made with respect to both sides of the thing question'd, then the Reasons for both are of equal or unequal force. If of unequal weight, then Reason it self teaches us to incline to that side which

which is supported with the strongest Reasons: However there is still some Imperfection in that Act, because 'tis done with some Scruple of Conscience; and if by our neglect that Scruple be not removed, our Action will not be wholly blameless. But if the Reasons on both sides be of the same weight, and taken out of the Scriptures, then 'tis to be enquir'd what is most agreeable with the Flesh, and what with the Spirit, and the latter is to be made choice of as most suitable with the Christian Religion, which is contrary to the Lusts of the Flesh. But if neither favours Sensuality, and both are supported by Reasons taken from Scripture, our Action will not be altogether blameless, let us incline to which side soever; and if we can, we must suspend it. And in the mean time 'tis our Duty to consult the Word of God, to enquire with Sincerity what the true meaning of it is, and earnestly to pray God for the Assistance of his Holy Spirit to discover to us his true Will, which he will not deny to those that ask it of him in Faith and Truth.

C H A P. III.

Of Moral Actions, both Good and Bad.

Moral Actions what.

BEfore we proceed to the distinct Consideration of the Covenant it self, or the particular Duties which God therein requires of Men, it will be necessary to premise some things in general concerning the Nature of *Moral Actions*; by which we mean such Actions, as are free and voluntary, not forc'd or constrain'd, or necessary; and which are imploy'd about some Moral Good, or Evil. Hence it appears that those Moral Actions are either *good*, or *bad*, or *indifferent*. Of these we will treat particularly in two distinct Sections.

S E C T.

S E C T. I.

Of Good Works.

The *Moral* Actions which are *Good*, are such as *Good works* agree with their Rule, the Divine Law, whether Natural or Revealed. By this Definition are described all good Works in general, even those which without any Divine Revelation are performed according to the Rule of right Reason. But here we are to consider such good Works as are prescribed to us in the Gospel under a promised Reward and a threatened Punishment.

Now in these *Evangelical Good Works*, the following *Their necessary* Qualifications are indispensibly necessary. (1.) Since the Law of the Gospel is the only Rule of our Life and Manners, it follows that in a good Work 'tis especially requisite, that it be commanded in the Gospel, either expressly and particularly; or else included in some other general one, or such as may fairly be deduced from those which are expressly set down, and ought with them to be esteemed as a Precept. (2.) 'Tis necessary that it should be something positive, not a bare cessation from Action, for then he who sleeps or is idle, because he ceases from acting, would be said to do a good Work. (3.) To denominate it a good Work, not only a pious Design is requisite, but also that it be effectual, and upon the first occasion exerted and brought into Action. (4.) 'Tis necessary that the Action tend to a good End, for an Action good and laudable of it self is spoiled by an evil Intention, and becomes Sin; as our Saviour instances in Almsgiving, Prayer and Fasting, performed for Ostentation and vain Glory. (5.) And lastly, Knowledge is required, whereby a Man may thoroughly discern his whole Action with all the Circumstances of it, and be fully perswaded of the Probity thereof, and its Conformity with the Word or Law of God.

Having thus briefly hinted at the requisite Qualifications of an *Evangelical Good Work*, it may not be amiss to add something concerning the Nature of a *Good Work in general*. About this the Question is, whether

Not absolutely necessary to denominate Works good, that

that they
proceed
from Faith
in Christ.

whether it be essentially requisite to a good Work, that it should proceed from a true Faith in Jesus Christ? So the *Contra-remonstrants* generally maintain, who tell us, "That all the Works of the Unregenerate, or
"of those who are destitute of true Faith in Christ,
"are Sins; and tho' in the sight of Men they may
"seem to be Acts of Obedience, yet in God's sight
"they are only Hypocrisie: Nay tho' they are con-
"sonant to right Reason and the reveal'd Will of
"God, yet without Faith in Christ, they are only as
"so many illustrious Sins. How harsh an Opinion
is this? How contrary both to Scripture and Reason?

Proved,
1. By Scrip-
ture.

First it is contrary to *Scripture*, which teaches us quite otherwise: For therein we have on the other side, (1.) The Example of *Cornelius*, of whom before he believed in Jesus Christ, it is said, that *he was a devout Man, one that feared God with all his House, who gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to God alway; nay that his Alms and Prayers went up for a Memorial before God* *. Probably this Man might have heard of Christ, but that he did not believe in him, nay was only at most but a *Profelyte at the Gate*, appears from the whole Story: *Peter* being sent on purpose to convert him to the Faith, he was unwilling to do it till God had convinced him by a miraculous Vision, that he ought not to esteem any Man common or unclean. (2.) The Words of *Peter* † are home to the same purpose, where speaking of *Cornelius*, and such as he was, not of them who believed, as some suggest, he says, *Of a Truth I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons; but in every Nation he that feareth him and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him*. (3.) There are many other places of Scripture, wherein 'tis said of Men before they believed in Christ, that they *did the Truth, were willing to do the Will of him who sent Christ, were of God, and disposed to Eternal Life* ||; all which places we have insisted on already. (4.) *St. Paul* expressly tells us |||, That when the Gen-

* Acts 10. 2, 4. † Ibid. V. 33, 34. || John 3. 21. & 7. 17. & 8. 47. Acts 13. 48. ||| Rom. 2. 14, 15.

titles who have not the Law, do by Nature the things contain'd in the Law, these having not the Law are a Law unto themselves; who shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing Witness, and their Thoughts in the mean while accusing or excusing one another.

But Secondly, the *Contra-remonstrants* Opinion is no less contrary to Reason; for in order that any Action should be good, 'tis enough if it be agreeable to the Divine Law, whether Natural or Reveal'd, since both are the Rule of our Life; tho' a Man be ignorant of the Law or the Gospel. The Nature of a good Work does not precisely require, that Faith in Christ should be included in it, or that a direct and express Intention of honouring God by that Act should be annexed to it: Provided a general Design of serving God be in it, and the Nature of the Action be such as tends of it self to the Divine Honour; being performed without any Design of contradicting the Will of God, or out of vain Glory: For whatever is suitable to its Rule, is a Vertue by whomsoever it is done. Of this Nature were the Actions of many Heathens (at which some Christians may justly blush) such as, of *Socrates, Phocion, Aristides*, with abundance of others; and of even the *Stoicks*, who taught that Vertue was to be embraced for its own sake, and never to be abandoned, tho' they suffered the greatest of Torments for its sake.

I know but of two Objections worth answering, that lie against what has been said, which I will briefly set down, and as briefly answer. First 'tis urg'd, that *the Unregenerate have not the Holy Spirit in them, without which no good Work can be wrought.* *Two Objections answered.* Answ. Without the Holy Ghost no saving Work can be wrought; but by the Assistance of the common Grace granted to all Men, a Work truly pious and conformable to the Rule of Natural Religion may be done. Secondly 'tis objected, that the Apostle expressly says, *Without Faith it is impossible to please God* *. Answ. (1.) He does not here speak of Faith in Jesus Christ, but of

* *Heb.* 11. 6.

that whereby we believe that God is, and that he is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek him; which Faith a Man might have by the Light of Nature without the saving Knowledge of Jesus Christ. (2.) There is a difference between any Work's being pleasing to God, and a Man's pleasing him by that Work; for 'tis possible that some one good Work of a Man may be acceptable to God, as was *Ahab's* Repentance, *1 Kings* 21. 29. whilst the Man for other Sins may be unacceptable to him. More therefore is required for a Man's pleasing God, and that Faith is necessary thereto we freely grant. (3.) The Apostle here treats not of every manner of pleasing God, but of that wherein *Enoch* is said to have pleased him, who was translated by God that he might not see Death.

SECT. II.

Of Sin, and the several kinds of it.

*Sin with
its Quali-
ties,*

Moral Evil Actions, are such as do not agree with their Rule, viz. the Divine Law, whether Natural or Revealed; they are commonly called *Sins*, Sin being defin'd to be a *Transgression of the Law*. The Qualifications of Sin (besides what is common to it with all other Moral Actions, viz. its being voluntary) are, (1.) That it should be something Positive, and not only a mere Privation, which chiefly takes place in Sins of Commission. (2.) A purpose of doing Evil, as such, and forbidden by God, is not absolutely necessary, 'tis enough that what is done be of it self evil. (3.) Nor is it necessary that the Action should always tend to a bad End: True it is, a bad End aggravates the Sin; but if the Action be disagreeable to its Rule, it is evil, tho' it may be done for a good End: So true is it that we ought not to do Evil that Good may come, since even the best End will not sanctifie bad Means.

*Its several
kinds.*

But for a fuller Explication of the Nature of Sin, we will consider the several kinds into which it is generally divided, upon the account of its *Object*, *Subject*, *Cause*, *Manner*, *Effects*, and other *Circumstances*.

1. Sin is first of all divided with respect to its *Object*, or the Law which is transgressed. Now whereas the Precepts of the Law are some of them *Affirmative*, prescribing a Duty, and obliging Men to the Performance thereof, whenever an occasion offers: And others *Negative*, forbidding some Acts as unlawful, which are always Obligatory; hence arises a Distinction of Sins, into Sins. (1.) Of *Omission*, when any Action commanded by the Law is not performed, when there is an opportunity of doing it. (2.) Of *Commission*, when what is forbidden by the Law, as Perjury, Adultery, &c. is committed. The former is properly a refusing to do a Duty, tho' it be commonly attended with some Action, that directly or indirectly tends to the Omission: Whereas the Sin of *Commission* is always done by a positive Act, either inward in the Intention of the Heart, or external, of what kind soever it be.

1. Sins upon the account of their *Subject* are distinguished into, (1.) Those of the *Spirit*, which are chiefly done in the Mind and Heart of Man, to the Completion of which the Members of the Body concur. (2.) Those of the *Flesh*, which are perform'd by the Bodily Members, such as Murder, Theft, and especially those whose Object is some Carnal Pleasure, gratifying the Sense of Touching or Tasting, such as Drunkenness, Uncleanness, &c. This Distinction suits very well with that common one, whereby Sins are said to be either of the *Heart*, such as evil Thoughts and Lusting after what is forbidden; or of the *Mouth*, such as Blasphemy, evil Speaking, Lying, Slandering, &c. or in *Deed*, by some external Actions.

But here it may be asked, whether all *Concupiscence* which inclines to that which is unlawful be sinful? *What sort of Concupiscence is Threefold: (1.) There are some first Motions in our Hearts, viz. Natural Pro-*
Ans. *Concupiscence* is Threefold: (1.) There are some first Motions in our Hearts, viz. Natural Pro-
 pensions to that which is agreeable to our Nature, which are nothing else but a general Complacency in the thing which is grateful to us, and consequently seems worthy of our Love; and an Aversion to that which is ungrateful, so that here they stop and go no further. (2.) A *Delectation*, when the Mind thinks

long and with pleasure upon an unlawful and vicious Object. (3.) A *deliberate Design and Purpose* upon every opportunity that offers of doing what is grateful to the Flesh. As to the last of these, none can question the sinfulness thereof, for Sin consists rather in the Act of the Mind than in the external Execution thereof: 'Tis the Mind that properly is the Criminal, whilst the Bodily Members are as so many Instruments to execute what the Soul resolves upon. Nor is there any doubt to be made, but that if a Man delights in vain and unlawful Thoughts, he is guilty of Sin, tho' he has not as yet come to a fixed Resolution of practising what he thinks on. Such a Delight is unlawful, because it defiles the Heart of a Man, and pinions him down to sensual and carnal Pleasure. But then, as to the *first Motions*, Inclinations, and Aversions of Affection to a proposed Object that is grateful or ungrateful, without any fix'd Resolution, or taking any Delight in them, we do not look upon them to be sinful, but only Natural Motions of the Heart rais'd in us by the Representation of such or such an Object. For (1.) These are not in our Power, but often present themselves to our Thoughts whether we will or no; nay sometimes the more we resist them, the more they come upon us. (2.) So far are they from being Faults, that they are an occasion of exercising our Vertue, which consists in omitting what is grateful, and doing what is ungrateful to Flesh and Blood, out of a Love and Réverence to the Divine Command; but without these first Motions we do not know what is either grateful or ungrateful to the Flesh. (3.) These Motions were in our first Parents, even before the Fall. Now if such Motions were sinful, then there would be a Sin *prior* to the first Sin, which is absurd. (4.) And lastly, In our Saviour himself there was a Natural Abhorrency of Death, Disgrace and Pain, which made him before his Passion to pray the Father, *that if it were possible that Cup might pass from him*: And yet 'tis plain that he was not polluted with the least spot of Sin; for he restrained those first Motions, and submitted himself intirely to his Father's Will, adding, *However not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

To wicked Thoughts may be refer'd not only all absolute Desires of an unlawful thing, but even those that are with a *Proviso*, that such or such a thing were not prohibited by the Divine Command, *viz.* if the thing it self be apparently and intrinsically evil. As for instance, a Man would commit Adultery, were it not forbidden by God. For in such Desires there not only appears a great Propension to Sin, but also they cannot be entertained by a Man without some sort of Delight and Pleasure.

3. Sins with respect to their *Cause* are divided into 3. *Of Ignorance, Infirmary or Malice.* First, Sins of *Ignorance* are those, of which Ignorance is the sole *firmity or Cause*, and which would not be committed by Man *Malice.* were he not ignorant of his Duty. Of this Nature was St. Paul's Sin in persecuting the Church of Christ, and in some measure that of the *Jews* in crucifying our Saviour. Secondly, Sins of *Passion or Infirmary* are such as proceed from a sudden Emotion of the Sensitive Appetite, which by its Violence hurries the Will to a Consent, before Reason has made any Deliberation on the Matter. Of this Nature are sudden Fear, Anger, Joy, Grief, &c. They are called Sins of *Infirmary*, because we are inclin'd to Sin not so much by our Will, as by the Frailty of our Nature, which is born down by the Violence of our Passions. Thirdly, Sins of *Malice* are those which are committed upon a fixed Purpose, or mature Deliberation of Mind, with a full Liberty of acting going before. For a Man is not only at his full Liberty, when he has shut his Ears to all the Dictates of Reason to the contrary, that being the Case but of a few; but also when the Will it self being allured with the Temptations of Sin, freely consents to the acting of it, tho' Reason has exerted it self long before the Act, or in the very Act makes some faint Strugglings to the contrary. Then it is that the Spirit is made subject to the Flesh, and the Will laying aside and despising the Light of Reason, voluntarily consents to the Sin. Now the Will may be said directly and fully to do this, (1.) When a perfect Perception of the Understanding precedes the Consent; as when he who sins is not hurried away by a sudden and violent

Passion, nor wants time to take full Deliberation; or when he not only reflects upon the sensible Delectation, but also on the Moral Turpitude of the Sin. (2.) When the Approbation of the Will follows this Consideration of the Understanding, and this either *Positively* and *Directly* by consenting to a vicious Action; or *Negatively*, by not shaking hands with the vicious Delectation, but suffering it by its Continuance to tempt the Will to an Assent.

4. *Against and not against Conscience.*

4. Sins with respect to the *Manner* of their Commission, are (1.) Either *against Conscience*, when the Dictates thereof in prescribing what ought not, and what ought to be done, are not minded but disregarded, either before, or in the very Act of sinning. (2.) Or *not against Conscience*, which proceed not from an *Invincible*, but from an *affected Ignorance* of the Law; for tho' herein the Conscience does not condemn its Act, yet the Action is a Sin, because 'tis contrary to the Divine Law, the supreme Rule of our Practice, and even of Conscience it self.

5. *Reigning or not Reigning.*

5. A Sin may be said to be, (1.) Either a *Reigning Sin*, which by an inveterate Habit has got the Dominion over a Man, keeps him as his Slave, and upon every occasion presses him to the Commission of Sin: For by long Custom Sin has attracted so much seeming Sweetness, that a Man becomes an unequal Match for it, submits to it as his Lord and Master, and cannot shake off the Yoke thereof. (2.) Or else *not a Reigning Sin*, which is committed sometimes through Inadvertency, or a sudden and violent Passion, and in which the Man does not indulge himself, but forthwith resists, and parts from by a serious Repentance.

6. *Natural or Accidental.*

6. Sins are (1.) Either such in their *own Nature*, when the whole Essence of them is evil, or in which not only one single Circumstance of Action, but the whole Act is forbidden, as Murder, Theft, Blasphemy, &c. Or (2.) By *Accident* only, which in their own Nature are good, but corrupted by some vicious Act, or forbidden Circumstance of Action, such as Alms giving, Praying and Fasting, to be seen of Men.

7. *Either to Death or not unto Death.*

7. Upon the account of the *Effect*, some Sins are said to be *unto Death*, some *not unto Death*: From whence arises that notable Distinction between
Mortal

Mortal and Venial Sins. We will take both those Distinctions into Consideration, and enquire how far they agree and disagree with one another. We will begin with the Distinction of Sins into *Mortal* and *Venial*, of the Meaning and Truth whereof there are so many warm Disputes at present among Christians.

In the first place then the *Romanists* call those *Venial* *The Romanists* *Sins*, which in their own Nature merit Pardon, and do not deserve Eternal Death: And these they distinguish from *Venial Sins by Event*, whose Pardon we obtain by a consequent Repentance; and from *Venial Sins* proceeding from the Cause which are in some measure worthy of Pardon, as being committed through *Infirmity* or *Ignorance*. But this Opinion is very erroneous; for tho' we own that there is a great Inequality of Sins, yet there is none so small, but what God, if he would deal with us according to the strictness of his Justice, might punish with Eternal Death, or an Exclusion from the Beatifical Vision; since the very least Sin is a Deviation from the Obedience we owe to God. The most specious Plea for their Opinion is taken from *Mat. 5. 21, 22.* Where they say our Saviour takes notice of three sorts of *Anger*: First, Of a Man who is *angry with his Brother without a Cause*. Secondly, Of him who says to his Brother, *Raca*. And, Thirdly, Of him who says, *Thou Fool*. And that this last alone is pronounced worthy of Eternal Death, the first being only said to be in danger of the *Judgment*, and the other of the *Council*. *Ans.* The Solution of this is easie: For (1.) Our Saviour by these Expressions does not design to shew the Difference of Punishments due to each of those Sins; because all these Punishments belong'd to the two former Assemblies, wherein the Diversity of Punishments were not considered, but only a Cognizance taken of the different Crimes. (2.) He that says to his Brother, *thou Fool*, is pronounced guilty of Hell Fire. Therefore according to their Explication of the Words, the two former are not guilty of it, which is absurd: Because in this case the Punishment of a Murderer, who is said to be only in danger of the *Judgment*, would be less than his who says

to his Brother, *Thou Fool*. Our Saviour then by these Words only denotes the Certainty of the Punishment of all these, which could by no means be avoided: just as one condemn'd by the supreme Tribunal, has no Appeal to make from thence to a higher Court.

The Contra-remonstrants Opinion about it refuted.

Nor in the second place is this Distinction to be admitted in the Sense put upon it by the *Contra-remonstrants*, who say, that all the Sins of the *Elect* are *Venial*, since God pardons them all without Exception out of his mere Grace: But that all the Sins of the *Reprobate* are *Mortal*, since they commit none but what God will exact in his Severity a Punishment of. But this Opinion labours under very great Absurdities. For, (1.) By this means Sins would not be distinguished by their own Demerits, but by the Persons who commit them; and the same Sin committed by one that was *Elect* would be *Venial*, but committed by one that was *Reprobate* would be *Mortal*: And so God would not pass Sentence upon Persons according to their Sins, but upon Sins according to the Persons who commit them, which is highly repugnant to all the Notions we have of Justice. (2.) 'Tis expressly said *, that a Man may see his Brother sin a Sin unto Death, which is certainly a *mortal Sin*; tho' perhaps he knew not that it was a Sin unto Death, and therefore it might be possible for him to fall into it. (3.) It is a very dangerous Assertion, since it is an Inlet to all manner of Sins and Enormities, which may without fear of Punishment be committed by those, *viz.* the *Elect*, who ought most of all to abstain from them.

The true Explication of it.

This Distinction therefore we take in quite another Sense, as being more agreeable with the Holy Scripture. We call then that a *mortal Sin*, which God according to the Laws of the New Covenant will punish with everlasting Death and Damnation, unless it be sincerely repented of: for we know of no Sin, except that against the Holy Ghost (of which more anon) but what the Remission of it may be obtain'd by a true and unfeign'd Repentance. In this Sense those are mortal Sins, of which our Saviour by his Apostle pronounces

* 1 John 5. 16.

that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God *, and of which the Apostle says, *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die †*. By a *Venial Sin* we mean that which according to the Terms of the New Covenant shall not be expressly punish'd with Eternal Death; but the Remission of which God will grant, tho' a Man has not fully discharg'd himself from some one of them, or particularly repented of it, provided it be not his own Fault and Wilfulness that is the Hindrance thereof.

In quite another Sense does St. John say, that *there is a Sin unto Death, and a Sin not unto Death*; viz. not with respect to the Demerit of it according to the Divine Constitution, but with respect to its Event. By a *Sin unto Death* therefore we are to understand that, which will certainly be punished with everlasting Death by the peremptory Sentence of God; or which he has decreed never to pardon, but to punish with Eternal Damnation, and which is always attended with final Impenitence. And by a *Sin not unto Death*, is meant that which God has not as yet peremptorily decreed to punish with Eternal Death and Damnation, but the Remission of which a Man may obtain by a serious Repentance; but without such a Repentance, it becomes at last a Sin unto Death.

8. And lastly, Sin is said to be *against the Holy Ghost*, or not against him: which notable Distinction is taken from the Words of our Saviour ||, *All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men; but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men: And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World nor in the World to come.*

Now for a clear Apprehension of the Nature of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, spoken of by our Saviour, we must take notice of the Name by which this Sin is call'd, which is especially said to be *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*. (1.) Therefore every Sin a-

* 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 18, 19. Eph. 5. 5, 6. † Rom. 8. 13. || Mat. 12. 31, 32. Mark 3. 28, 29.

gainst the Holy Ghost (as all really are) is not hereby denoted, but one certain sort of Sin, expressly call'd *Blasphemy*. (2.) This is likewise evident from the occasion on which our Saviour utter'd it. He had cast a Devil out of a Man, at which the Multitude marvelled, and glorified God, saying, *Is not this the Son of David?* The *Pharisees* moved with Envy calumniated this Miracle, saying, *He doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils.* Our Saviour having shewn by several Arguments the Absurdity of this Calumny, goes on to tell us how great a Sin that was, and how directly it reflected upon the Holy Ghost; and that Remission of it could not be obtain'd either in this World, or the World to come. With Submission therefore to better Judgments, we are of Opinion that this Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost signifies that particular Sin, by which the miraculous Works wrought by our Saviour through the Power of the Holy Ghost, are attributed to the Devil: Whereas they who thus blasphemed, were either perswaded that such mighty Works could not be done by any other Power but what was Divine; or at least could not by any Experiment or probable Argument prove to the contrary. This Blasphemy is truly said to be against the Holy Ghost (because he is thereby directly affronted, and call'd an infernal Spirit) in Opposition to the Blasphemy against the Son of Man, whereby the Person of the Son is properly injur'd, when he is rejected (consider'd as a mere Man of a mean and abject Condition, without any Kingly Splendor) as one that falsely boasts himself to be the *Messiah*: Or when he is blasphemed as being a Glutton and Winebibber. But even this last Blasphemy must be consider'd distinctly from that, whereby his Heavenly Doctrine confirm'd by Miracles, or himself now exalted in Heaven, and apprehended by Faith, is blasphemed. For in such a Case he is not blasphemed as the Son of Man, but as the Lord who pour'd down the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles: Which Blasphemy, if it be not the same with that mention'd by our Saviour, yet at least is very much akin to it. From all which 'tis evident, that this Sin can hardly be committed at this time, wherein we do not see those Miracles with our Eyes, and consequently

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requently tho' we might blaspheme against Christ and his Doctrine, yet this Blasphemy would not be of the same nature with that of the *Pharisees*, who were sensible Witnesses of those Miracles, and yet attributed them to the Power of the Devil.

From all this 'tis likewise evident, why this Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is said *not to be forgiven in this or the World to come*; viz. because herein the highest degree of Malice and Wickedness displays it self. Not that God cannot pardon this Sin, but because the Remission of it cannot be obtain'd according to the Terms of the new Covenant. Add to this, that Repentance it self, the necessary thing requir'd before Remission, is render'd impossible to such a Blasphemer by the ordinary Grace of God contain'd in the Covenant: since he who ascribes to the Devil the miraculous Works of the Holy Ghost, wrought to prove the Divinity of Christ's Doctrine, has made the Grace of God, whereby he should be converted, of none effect to himself.

Why it is said not to be forgiven.

It is manifest by all that has hitherto been said of the various kinds of Sins, that there is a great Inequality between them, and that one is more or less grievous than another. This Difference is taken notice of by our Saviour in several Places of Scripture *; and appears from the various Circumstances of Sin, upon the account of its *Cause*, its *Object*, and the *Act* it self. With respect to the *Cause*, a Sin committed through Ignorance, Inadvertency, or sudden Passion, is less heinous than that which is committed in contempt of God, with a wicked Heart and propense Malice. Again, with respect to the *Object*, 'tis more grievous to sin against God, than Man; against a Relation, than a Stranger; against a Magistrate, than a private Person. Lastly, with respect to the *Act* it self, there are several degrees in the same kind of Sin, one of which is more notorious than another: Thus Adultery is a greater Sin than Fornication, Incest than Adultery, &c. Homicide than causeless Anger, Parricide than simple Murder, and so of the rest. Wherefore 'tis a very foolish Argument to say, that because all

All Sins are not equal.

* Mat. 7. 3. John 19. 11. Luke 12. 47, 48.

Sins are Deviations from the Rule, therefore they are all equal: For, as has been shewn, the Deviation out of Ignorance or Infirmary is not to be compared with a design'd and malicious Deviation: Nor is he who departs a little from this Rule in the same Level with him who runs away from it. Both indeed swerve from the Rule, and consequently neither of them are without Sin; but because the one has departed from it farther than the other, therefore his Sin is more heinous than the other's.

None to be indulged.

This we do not say as if we would indulge any one in the Commission of any of the least Sin. For, (1.) Tho' some Sins may in the Judgment of God be esteem'd less than others, yet they ought not to be reckoned small by us, nothing that he has forbidden being so to be esteemed of. The Reverence we owe to the Divine Prohibition ought to be a sufficient Barrier to restrain us from venturing upon the Sin. (2.) A Sin that is otherwise small becomes grievous, when committed with a deliberate Mind; since Offences are not estimated by the external Act, so much as they are by the Intention of him that does them. (3.) That which seems small to us, is sometimes punished by God severely, as appears by the Judgments inflicted on small Offences recorded in Scripture *.

A Caution.

Wherefore the Doctrine of the *Romanists* concerning Venial Sins, is very dangerous to, and destructive of the Souls of Men; since by their Limitations and Restrictions they make almost all Sins Venial, and say that the Pardon of them may be obtain'd by a small Pecuniary or Corporeal Mulct, as is evident from the Writings of their Casuists. For thus they not only tempt Men to sin, by the Hopes, nay the certain Promise of Impunity; but what is worse, shut out the Thoughts of a serious Repentance, since Pardon being obtain'd by the Payment of a little Money, or suffering a trifling Penance, there is no occasion for them to trouble their Heads about Repentance as a necessary Means of procuring Remission, but may rest secure in the Satisfaction already made by them.

* Num. 15. 32. 1 Sam. 13. 10, &c. Num. 22. 17, 12. 2 Sam. 6. 6, 7.

C H A P. IV.

Of Obedience to Christ's Precepts in general.

Hitherto we have considered the Nature of Moral Obedience. Actions whether good or bad in general; and to Christ's Precepts. I shall now proceed to treat particularly of those Christian Vertues or Actions prescribed us by Jesus Christ. Without enquiring into the various Appellations of our Duty prescribed by our Saviour, it will not be amiss to examine why in the New Testament our Obedience is denoted chiefly by the Terms of *Faith* and *Repentance*.

Our Obedience is call'd *Repentance* with respect to our former State and Condition; tho' really it has regard to what is to come. The very requiring therefore of Repentance is an exacting of Obedience, before which Disobedience and Transgression preceded, and signifies that he to whom Repentance is prescribed, was before a Sinner. This is intimated by those various Expressions and Phrases by which 'tis denoted, and which signify the same thing with Repentance; such as *Conversion**, *Renovation*†, *a new Creature*‡, *Regeneration*||, *putting off the Old, and putting on the New Man**, *awaking from Sleep, and rising from the Dead*†. This relation to our former State and Condition God was pleas'd to have included in the Stipulation of our Duty under the New Covenant: (1.) That the Grace of God under the New Covenant might constantly be in our view, since we were unworthy to be called to the Participation of those Divine Benefits; because he who has transgress'd the Divine Law, does not deserve any new Favour, and this whole Vocation is unmerited. (2.) That it might appear that our Obedience by any Effi-

*Why call'd
Repentance.*

* Acts 14. 15. & 26. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 16. † Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 4. 23. Tit. 3. 5. ‡ 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. || John 3. 6. * Eph. 4. 22. † Eph. 5. 14.

cacy of its own deserves not the Reward of Eternal Life, but is wholly owing to the Divine Grace. (3.) That thereby might be intimated that a Christian cannot attain to an absolute Perfection in this Life, that he ought not to fix in any degree of it, but still to press forward to the Mark of his high Calling.

Why called Faith.

There are several Reasons why Christian Obedience is called Faith. (1.) Because Faith is the Cause and Source of all good Works, and consequently of our whole Obedience. Here is therefore a Metonymy of the Antecedent for the Consequent, or rather of the Cause for the Effect. (2.) That hereby the easiness of the Condition requir'd on God's part for Salvation might be express'd; since 'tis easy to believe that, to which Faith has a more immediate regard, and from whence our Piety proceeds: viz. that a Man, after he is dead, shall rise again, and be taken up into Heaven, there to enjoy Eternal Happiness; and since the Word *Faith* does not denote that God requires an equal Obedience from all, but only so much as Faith, or a certain Expectation of the Divine Promises can produce in a Man. (3.) That hereby we might understand that the Obedience we perform, does not of it self merit Justification, because Faith includes Grace, i. e. supposes the Revelation and Vocation of God granted by his mere Grace to Man, before he could perform any Obedience to God; and because the Works proceeding from Faith are not so much our Works as God's, who works them in us by the Greatness of his Promises, and the Power of the Holy Ghost working in us. (4.) Because Faith hath always an Eye to God, as the Fountain of our Salvation, who is by Faith own'd to be such.

CHAP. V.

Of the Intellectual Vertues.

THE particular Vertues wherein the Duty of a Christian consists, may be reduc'd to two General Heads; for first some belong to the Mind or Understanding, others to the Will and Manners. The former are as it were the Eyes of a Christian Soul, by which the latter should be directed. The Intellectual Vertues are *Knowledge* and *Wisdom*; which two Words are often taken in Scripture for one another, tho' they are very distinct, as will appear by the two following Sections.

The Intellectual Vertues.

SECT. I.

Of Science or Knowledge.

Science or *Knowledge* is that Intellectual Vertue, whereby we have a right Apprehension of those things that are necessary to Salvation. Things necessary to Salvation are therefore the Object of our Knowledge; which the Scripture exhibites to us under several Expressions*. But that we may comprehend all these under one Head, we say that the Object of our Divine Knowledge are those things that relate to Eternal Salvation; and they are such as are absolutely necessary to Salvation, or only conducive thereto. I call those absolutely necessary, without the Knowledge of which we can neither perform the Duty required of us, nor attain to Everlasting Salvation; of which nature are the Mysteries of Faith to be believ'd, as the Foundation of our religious Worship;

* Eph. 1. 17. 1 John 2. 13. Eph. 4. 20. 2 Pet. 1. 8. & 2. 20. & 3. 18. 1 John 2. 3, 4. and several other Places.

or the Precepts to be observ'd; or the Promises to be expected by us. The things conducive to Salvation are such as are not of themselves necessary to be known, but yet when known are of great Use for the strengthening of our Faith, and promoting our Practice of Piety.

Its Attributes.

The Qualifications or Attributes of this Knowledge as described in Scripture are these two. (1.) That it be Spiritual *, as owing its Original to the Divine Spirit †; which is employed about Spiritual things, and renders a Man truly Spiritual, by conquering all carnal Lusts and Affections. (2.) That it be from above ‖, *i. e.* from Heaven, descending from God the Father of Lights ‖, employ'd in Heavenly things, and consequently inform'd of the manner of leading a Heavenly Life; and is oppos'd to that Knowledge which is earthly, sensual, devilish.

Either perfect or imperfect.

This Knowledge of things necessary to Salvation admits of several Distinctions; as first, there is a more imperfect Knowledge, when a Man has only some Notices of the Rudiments of the Christian Religion, absolutely necessary to Salvation; or what he does know is only in the gross, without any distinct or accurate Perception, or a full Persuasion of the Solidity thereof: and there is a more perfect and exact Knowledge, when we apprehend and are thoroughly perswaded of those things that tend to the farther Explanation of what is necessary, and to a more assured Belief thereof.

Or Theoretical or Practical.

Secondly, Knowledge is said to be, (1.) Theoretical, which is a Knowledge only of those things which tend to the Perfection of the Mind, without any regard had to the Reformation of the Manners: which is therefore stiled an ineffectual Knowledge *. (2.) Practical and Effectual, so deeply rooted in the Minds of Men, as to produce an Obedience to the Divine Commands: in this Sense we are to understand those Words of our Saviour, *This is Life Eternal, that they should*

* Col. 1. 9. † 1 Cor. 2. 6, 7. ‖ Jam. 3. 17. ‖ Jam. 1. 17. * 1 Cor. 13. 2. Rom. 1. 18, &c. Luke 12. 47. Jam. 4. 17.

know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent ¹; for a mere Knowledge of God and Jesus Christ is not sufficient to Salvation without a due worshipping of both. Theoretical or Ineffectual Science is a confus'd, general, and superficial Knowledge, such as does not reach the Heart, and incline it to Obedience. Hence it is that we see some Men of great Science, but of little Conscience; who exactly know a great many things, but never practise them; being not fully persuaded of the Divine Promises, but fastned down to this Earth and the Enjoyments thereof. Whereas on the contrary, a Practical and Effectual Knowledge is such an one as is distinct and solid; whereby we not only have a distinct Apprehension of the saving Truth, especially the Divine Precepts and Promises, with the Foundations on which they are grounded, but also embrace this Truth as necessary; or at least make no question of the certainty of it.

But a Man may try himself whether he has a solid and perfect Knowledge of the Divine Precepts and Promises, by examining his own Life, and passing a Judgment accordingly on the Love he bears to them. Since they who know them superficially are compar'd to Children, whilst those who have a full and perfect Knowledge thereof are compar'd to Men grown up. A love therefore of things less worthy, whilst the more worthy are neglected, and an Aversion to things profitable tho ungrateful, argues us to be Children in Knowledge, and to be like them in our way of living. For instance; (1.) Children dislike the Chastisement of their Parents as troublesome, tho it be very beneficial to them: Therefore it is a sign of being Babes in the Knowledge of Christ, to be afraid of the Cross and Adversities, as if they were hurtful; whereas in reality they are beneficial to us, in that they wean us from the love of the things of this World, and raise our Affections to things above. (2.) Children are fond of Trifles, prefer an Apple to a Diamond, whilst adult Persons undervalue them: just thus, 'tis a sign

*Signs of an
ineffectual
Knowledge.*

¹ John 17. 3. To which may be added 1 John 2. 3, 4. & 3. 6. & 4. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. Heb. 5. 11, &c.

of being Infants in the Knowledg of Christ, to prefer the Riches and Pleasures of this World to those which are to come; and a Token of a more perfect Knowledg, to despise and part with them for the sake of God and Religion. (3.) Children make a noise and an outcry when their Play-things, how trivial soever, are taken away from them; tho should they lose a Father or a Mother, they would be insensible of the Loss: So likewise is it a Sign of our being Infants in Christ, to be troubled at the Loss of some worldly Enjoyments, without being mov'd at the Loss of the Divine Favour. (4.) And lastly, Children are generally affrighted at a Phantom which cannot hurt them, whereas they handle such things as are hurtful, without the least fear or concern, such as a Knife, Poison, &c. So likewise is it a Demonstration of our being Children in the Knowledg of Christ; if we are terrify'd at the Cross, as at some deadly thing, which can be no hindrance to our everlasting Salvation, but is rather a Promoter of it; and yet at the same time not be afraid of committing Sin, the most effectual and deadly Poison of the Soul.

*Means of
attaining
an effectual
Knowledg
in Christ.*

After we have thus thorowly search'd our Hearts, whether there is in them that true solid Knowledg of Christ, and find that we want it; the means of attaining it are, (1.) A frequent and diligent reading of the Scriptures, which fully and perfectly contain in them all things necessary and conducive to Salvation; and by the perusal of which a Man may be fully instructed in all the Duties of a Christian. (2.) Religious Conferences, by which conferring with more skilful and learned Men we may attain to a true meaning of the Holy Scriptures, in which the Learned are so much conversant. (3.) Ardent Prayer to Almighty God, that he would be pleas'd to give us a full and more perfect Knowledg of what does not appear so clearly to us in his reveal'd Will. (4.) A Religious Affection, and a Mind truly docible. (5.) Humility, that we be not puffed up with any vain-glorious Thoughts of our own Wisdom, but postponing that, give up our selves absolutely to be instructed by God, and inform'd of his Will as reveal'd to us in the Holy Scripture. (6.) And lastly, a right use

use of the Knowledg granted us by God, to the Divine Glory, and our own Proficiency: *For to him that hath, i. e. who makes a right use of what he hath, more shall be given; but to him that hath not, i. e. who makes not a right use of what he hath, from him shall be taken that which he hath.*

The Reasons and Arguments to excite Men to this *Arguments* Divine Knowledg are, (1.) The Excellency of it, as to excite being the Eye of the Understanding, by which it is *thereto*. directed to walk without hesitation or stumbling, and without which it would be in darkness, and in danger of falling. (2.) Because we are call'd and invited to it, Christians being the Children of Light, and not of Darkness, may are said *to be Light in the Lord*. (3.) This Knowledg is a requisite Qualification for those who are in Covenant with God, who thereby are said to know God from the greatest to the least. (4.) This Spiritual Knowledg brings along with it a Spiritual Pleasure and Delectation to the Mind, the most agreeable Happiness and Perfection of the Soul. (5.) They who despise this Knowledg are compar'd to the Beasts who perish. (6.) The Contempt and Neglect of it is the Cause of Condemnation, and the Deprivation of it is filed the greatest of Miseries.

There are two things opposite to Knowledg; First, *Things in* in the Excess; and Secondly, in the Defect of it. In *Excess* *op-* the Excess, Curiosity is justly to be blam'd, when a *posite to* Man neglecting what is beneficial and clearly reveal'd *Knowledg*. by God, enquires into such things as are useless and obscure, and which God would have to be conceal'd from us. Now such a Curiosity consists in the following Particulars. (1.) When we covet to know what God has not reveal'd to us. (2.) When we enquire into those things that do not concern us. (3.) When neglecting things necessary, we lay the whole, or at least the greatest stress upon enquiring into such things as are less useful. (4.) When we do not acquiesce in the Will of God, but are for enquiring into the Reasons and Causes thereof, and confidently determine what are the Causes and Ends of the Divine Judg-

* Mat. 25. 29.

ments, which are sometimes exercised in this World. What is this but to pretend to be of the Privy-Council of Heaven; to set up for Judges of the Sincerity or Hypocrisy of other Mens Actions and Hearts; and to pass Sentence upon the most secret and hidden things, just as if they were as clear and manifest as the Sun at Noon-day?

The Opposite to Knowledge in point of defect, Ignorance.

The Opposite to *Knowledge* in point of *Defect* is *Ignorance*, viz. of the things requisite to Salvation, whether absolutely necessary, or only conducive thereto. This is usually distinguish'd, (1.) Into *simple Ignorance*, and *Ignorance of a depraved Disposition*.. The former is, when a Man is ignorant barely of the saving Truth, occasion'd either for want of due Revelation, as is the Case of the Heathen, who have not heard of Christ; or through defect of Understanding, as is the Case of Children and Fools. The latter kind of Ignorance, is that which embraces Error instead of Truth; and is either in Infidels, who believe Idols to be the true God, and reject the Gospel when announced unto them; or in the notoriously erroneous Persons, who do not apprehend the Meaning of Scripture, tho of the highest moment to their Everlasting Salvation; or in Apostates, who turning from the Faith, embrace their former Infidelity. (2.) Ignorance is either *affected*, proceeding from a Man's own fault, either in a wilful affectation of Ignorance; or, which is all one, in neglecting the means of acquiring Knowledge, that he may the more securely, and with less Remorse of Conscience give the loose to his extravagant Lusts: Or else *unaffected*, which is not indeed altogether without a Man's own fault, tho it is not so heinous as the other; since it proceeds not from a wicked Mind, but from mere negligence in not using all that Care which a Man, desirous of Everlasting Happiness, could use, in order to be deliver'd from his State of Ignorance.

S E C T. II.

Of Prudence or Wisdom.

Prudence or Wisdom is that Intellectual Vertue, Prudence whereby a Man having propos'd a vertuous End to him- self, may truly find out for himself and others proper Means tending to that End; and upon observing the Circumstances of Times, Places, and Persons, may apply them for the attaining of the best End.

The first Requisite of Prudence then is, to propose *Its Requi-* a Vertuous End to it self: since if that be Vicious, the sites: Means tending thereto cannot be proved to be Vertu- The first. ous. Now this End is either general, viz. the Glory of God, and the Eternal Welfare of our own Souls, and of our Neighbours: or particular ones, which are various, all included under the general and ultimate End, and conducive thereto, either naturally or accidentally.

Another thing necessary, is, That Choice be made of *The second.* proper Means for the attaining that End; wherein 'tis requisite, (1.) That they be Vertuous: for we usually judg of the nature of the End by the Means, and if these are vicious, so is the Design of the Agent supposed to be. (2.) That they be adapted to the attaining of the End, which is the proper business of Prudence to take care of. For it is the Duty of a Good Man to make choice of none but Vertuous Means; but a Wise Man must pitch upon none but such as are most suited to the obtaining of the End.

A third thing requisite, is, that a Man carefully *The third.* make use of the Means he has thus made choice of, being always upon his guard that he omit nothing that is profitable to be done, nor commit any thing that is ill. See then (says the Apostle) that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as wise. More especially a Man should direct all his Actions to the best End, which he has upon mature and deliberate Thoughts

Religious
Prudence,
its Offices.

once fix'd upon, and should forgo all other things for the attaining of that alone.

Prudence is commonly distinguish'd into *Religious* and *Civil*: the former is that we insist upon at present, tho it may very well consist with the latter. *Religious Prudence* then, is that which teaches a Man to make choice of Means proper for the attaining Everlasting Salvation, and how he ought to demean himself in the Business of Religion: the Offices of which *Prudence* are various. (1.) Duly to weigh and know the due value of every thing, and upon that Discovery to bestow our highest Love and Esteem on things most excellent, but a less or greater degree of Love upon the rest, according as they have a more or less relation to the former. Since therefore *Eternal Salvation* and the Enjoyments of the next Life, are incomparably beyond those of this, hence it is the part of *Prudence* to propose to it self *Eternal Life* as its sole and chief End; and if it cannot otherwise be obtain'd, to part with all the Enjoyments, and suffer all the Miseries of this Life for its sake. (2.) A Christian ought diligently to survey all the Dangers that threaten his Salvation, and as far as possible to decline them, lest being over-power'd by them he fall short of his propos'd End. Such a Circumspection and Watchfulness as this, is very frequently recommended to us in Scripture; and 'tis highly necessary, considering the Subtilty, Policy and Diligence, as well as Force and Strength of our three Spiritual Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. (3.) If we cannot avoid those Dangers, then we must arm our selves in time against them, that so having on our Spiritual Armour, we may be able to resist the Enemies of our Souls. And since the Devil is always active in opposing our Happiness, therefore ought we at all times to have our spiritual Weapons in a readiness, where, by we may be able to withstand his Assaults, especially when the Hour of Temptation approaches; lest being unprovided against his Attempts, we be defeated in our Spiritual Warfare, and miss of Everlasting Salvation. (4.) We ought to take care of

Thus the Apostle advises Eph. 6. 11, &c.

the

the Salvation of our Neighbour, as well as of our own. But whereas in this Duty we have to do with other Men, and therefore some Inconveniencies may befall us, upon the account of the Variety of Tempers with which we have to deal; hence another Act of *Prudence* arises, viz. that when we undertake any thing relating to our own, or the Salvation of other Men, and our own temporal Good or Detriment is concern'd, that even then we omit no part of our Duty, nor neglect our Neighbour's Welfare, and yet at the same time take care to avoid the Inconvenience so far as is consistent with the discharge of our Duty. This prudential Rule chiefly takes place, when for professing or propagating the Truth of Christianity we are in danger of losing our Estates, Credit, or Lives: or when some ungrateful Truth must be told our Neighbour, his Vices reprov'd, and for which Office we must sometimes expect his Displeasure. Another Act of *Prudence* under this last Head is, that we nicely consult the Advantage of our Neighbour, and frame our Actions after such a manner, as may be most likely to do him the greatest Good. Thus for instance, we must inform the Ignorant of the Truth and Weight of the Christian Doctrine, and convince them with strong and solid Arguments; but still have a more particular regard to such as are purely ignorant of the Truth, than to those who shew an Aversion to it. Again, tho our Saviour commands us, *not to cast that which is Holy unto Dogs, nor our Pearls before Swine*; yet even with respect to these Despisers of the Truth, we are not to look upon them as desperate, and give over all care for their Souls: but such Methods ought to be us'd, and such convenient Opportunities to be laid hold on, as may be proper to incline them by degrees to hearken to the Truth, and to win them step by step, till at last they come to obey the saving Truth of the Gospel. That this is practicable, appears from the Example of those *Publicans* and Harlots, notorious Sinners, *Sinners* emphatically so call'd with respect to others,

who believed in the preaching of *John the Baptist*, whilst the *Pharisees*, a more righteous Sect than their Neighbours, rejected him and his Doctrine. Lastly, with respect to those who own, embrace and profess the truth of Christianity, but whose Lives are not conformable thereto; these are to be reclaimed and snatched as it were from the Flames of Destruction by earnest and serious Admonitions. But even here great Prudence and Discretion is requir'd, in timing our Admonitions, and tempering our Reproofs, so as may be most likely to work upon the Hearts of those whom we advise or reprove. Upon the whole, in all the foremention'd Cases, whether we inform the Ignorant, convince the Obstinate, or reclaim the Sinner from the Error of his Ways, special Care is to be taken that we by our Example give them a full Demonstration of our being perfectly convinc'd of the Truths we would inculcate upon them: For should we give the lye to what we say by an unsuitable Life and Conversation, with what Grace can we press those things upon others, which we practise not our selves? We shall have as little Success from the Instructions, Admonitions and Reproofs we give, as he who beats the Air, or talks to the Wind.

Means of
attaining
Christian
Prudence.

The Means whereby Christian Prudence ought to be attained are various. True it is, Goodness of Nature is a fair Step towards it; but since that is not equal in all, and since the very best Nature is not of it self sufficient to attain it, and the most unhappy Temper may by the application of due Means arrive to it, therefore these Means derived chiefly from the Divine Assistance, ought to be us'd. (1.) Earnest and fervent Prayers to Almighty God for it'. (2.) A diligent and attentive Reading of the Scripture, which *makes wise the Simple*¹, *is able to make us wise unto Salvation, and to make the Man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works*². But more especial Care is to be taken to apply what we read to our selves; this being properly the prudent Man's part, who converts all to his own use, and reaps a

¹ Jam. 1. 5. ² Psal. 119. 7. ³ 2 Tim. 3. 15, 17.

Benefit from every Page he reads: whilst on the contrary he who reads without applying it to himself, fills his Head indeed with Notions, whilst his Heart is empty, and his Soul in a starving Condition. (3.) To lay aside our own Wisdom, and seek for that alone which proceeds from God. (4.) Reading of Histories, and the Vicissitudes that have happened in Human Counsels and Affairs; especially the History of the Bible, and observing the Divine Judgments exercis'd upon ungodly Men; that being caution'd by their Example, we may beware of falling into the same Calamities with them.

And certainly we ought to be excited to this Vertue, *Motives to* not only by the Excellency thereof, which in some *excite us* degree resembles the Divine Providence, in making *to it.* choice of such means as are proper for the acquiring the best end, but also by the great Usefulness thereof; since it teaches us to avoid what is hurtful, and to be wise at another's Cost, and also brings forth such Fruits as tend of themselves to Life and Salvation, as 'tis described by Solomon at large, *Prov. 2. 10, 11, 12, &c. and Ch. 3. 13, 14.*

The two Extremes of Prudence lie either in the *Its two* excess or defect thereof; tho upon a strict view it *Extremes.* will be found that they are both defective, and may be comprehended under the general Title of Imprudence and Folly,

The Extreme therefore in the excess is Craftiness or *1. In the* Cunning, when a Man proposes to himself a bad end, *excess, viz.* but pursues it with proper means. This is call'd carnal Wisdom, and regards only the Conveniences and Profits of this Life; and rather than not attain them, the Man postpones his Concern for the Chief Good, or Eternal Happiness, and the means which conduce thereto. And this is the case of all those, who propose to themselves either Riches, or Pleasures, or any other worldly Enjoyment as their main end. Now what is all this but mere Folly, in neglecting the best and ultimate End of Man, and pursuing that which tends to Destruction? Such Men are not indeed fond of a destructive End, consider'd as such (for no Man can be supposed to propose Eternal Death and Misery as the Scope of his Actions) but as 'tis grateful and *Craftiness.* pleasing

pleasing to them; they having no Knowledg, or at least not a just Esteem for any higher Good: And herein their Folly consists, as might be made evident in all the Instances of those who court and hunt after the Pleasures, or Riches, or Honours of this World. However it must be own'd, that there is something of Cunning in the Actions of such Men, because they can tell how to find out and apply the Means proper for the attaining the End propos'd: nay, they can use Frauds and Tricks whereby to circumvent and impose upon pious and sincere Men; and these, the more skill they have, the greater mischief can they do. But the worst of all are such Men, as by their outward Acts put on the Semblance of Religion, and thereby insinuate themselves into the Affections of the Simple and Superstitious, and enrich themselves with their Gifts and Presents. Such as these are said to make Gain their Godliness¹, and to enter into Widows Houses, leading captive silly Women laden with Sins²; like the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* of old, who eat up Widows Houses, under a pretence of making long Prayers³.

2. In the defect, Folly.

The other Extreme lying in the defect, is Folly; which neither proposes to it self a due End, nor knows how to use proper Means for attaining the End propos'd, or to ward off what is prejudicial to it self. This sort of Imprudence branches it self out into many Particulars. (1.) When a Man has not a right Knowledg of the Means tending to the best End: of which nature are the Superstitious, who lay a greater stress on the Observance of outward Ceremonies and Rites, than on the intrinfecal Parts of Religion, Soundness of Faith, and Holiness of Life. (2.) When a Man knows his Duty, but does it not, and so misses of his chief Good. Such an one our Lord compares to a foolish Man, who built his House upon a sandy Foundation, and which fell upon the first Storm that beat against it⁴. (3.) When a Man, not duly considering the Inconstancy of earthly Enjoyments, relies upon them as if they were certain and

¹ 1 Tim. 6. 5. ² 2 Tim. 3. 6. ³ Mat. 23. 14. ⁴ Mat. 7. 26, 27.

lasting; of which kind was the foolish rich Man in the Gospel¹. (4.) When a Man knows not how to avoid the Inconveniencies and Dangers which threaten him, but runs headlong into them: For 'tis Folly in the abstract not to look forward, but only to be affected with what is present; and like blind Men to fall down those Precipices, of which they might have been aware, had they duly regarded them.

CH A P. VI.

Of Vertues relating to the Will, and first of FAITH in Jesus Christ.

NEXT to the two Intellectual Vertues follow those of the Will or Manners, comprehending Holiness of Life in general, and all the Parts of it in particular. These respect either all Men in general, or only some particular Persons, according to the Diversity of their Ranks and Stations in the civil Society of which they are Members. Again, those Vertues which affect all Men, are either about things necessary, wherein properly and truly Holiness consists; or about things indifferent. Of the Vertues relating to things necessary, some are general, others more special. The general ones are such as comprehend summarily the whole Duty of a Christian, and are these two, Faith in Jesus Christ, and Repentance. Having thus distributed the several Vertues of a Christian into their several Classes, we shall now proceed to give a more particular view of them, and in this Chapter shall consider the first general Vertue, viz. *Faith in Jesus Christ*, with all that is proper for a Christian to know of it; which we shall do in several distinct Sections.

¹ Luk. 12. 20.

S E C T. I.

Of the Antecedent Act of Faith, viz. Knowledg.

*Faith in
Christ de-
fin'd, with
its several
Acts.*

Without taking notice of the various Acceptations of the word FAITH in Scripture, and the Perfection or Imperfection of it, according to more or less Degrees of Revelation communicated to Men; we shall confine our selves only to give an account of that sort of Faith which is most proper to be known and understood by a Christian. *Faith then in Jesus Christ is not only a Knowledg and Assent, whereby we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the only Saviour of all who live according to the Gospel-Rule; but likewise the Confidence and Assurance we put in him as our Prophet, Priest and King, whereby we are fully persuaded, if we obey his Doctrine, that we shall by him attain Remission of Sins and Eternal Life: producing of it self a serious and effectual Purpose of performing that Obedience he requires of us.* From this Definition it appears, that Faith is not a single Habit or Act, but consists of several Parts, and comprehends under it several Acts. (1.) An antecedent Act, viz. Knowledg. (2.) Its formal Act, viz. Assent, to which is annexed Assurance. (3.) Its consequent Act, Obedience, which is not only a constituent part of Faith, but the immediate Effect thereof, and that which renders it a lively Faith.

Its antecedent Act. The antecedent Act of Faith is Knowledg, on which Faith it self is founded, and which being taken away, Knowledg. is effectually destroyed; *for how, says the Apostle, shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? &c.* Hence 'tis that by a Synecdoche of the Part for the Whole, Faith it self is sometimes described by the word Knowledg. Now the Object of this Knowledg is all those things that are necessary to be known in order to Salvation, such as God, his Attributes and Works, Jesus Christ, with his Person and

* Rom. 10. 14. * Tit. 1. 2. Joh. 17. 3.

Offices, and the Divine Precepts, Promises and Threatnings. But we do not here reckon as things necessary, all such as are controverted in the Schools, but only such, without which Faith in God, and in Jesus Christ as our Saviour, the Observation of the Divine Precepts, and Belief of the Promises cannot be of any force; a Summary of which we have exhibited to us in that which is called *the Apostles Creed*. However, we do not pretend to discourage any Christian from making a further Progress in the Knowledge of Divine things; but what we mean is, that they who know and believe the things necessary to Salvation, and live according to that Knowledge and Belief, are really of the number of the Faithful, tho they are ignorant of, or do not rightly understand some other things that are not precisely necessary.

This Knowledge is requisite in opposition to that implicit and blind Faith of the *Romanists*, whereby a Man is said to be obliged to believe as the Church believes, tho he knows nothing of it: For an implicit Faith is as it were under a Cloud, by which a thing is believed in general, contrary to an explicit Faith, whereby a Man believes any thing distinctly and particularly. But for a full Confutation of the *Romanists* implicit Faith, we say, that this implicit Faith may admit of a twofold Sense. (1.) As it relates to the Holy Scripture, and all the things contained therein: Thus when we explicitly believe in general, that the Scripture is Divine, and consequently all and every thing contain'd in it must be credited; we likewise implicitly believe all the Histories and Doctrines delivered therein: it being enough to shew that they are in Scripture, in order to create Belief. However this is not a saving Faith, unless all the particular things necessary to Salvation are believed distinctly and explicitly. (2.) As it relates to the Church of *Rome*, and as it is joined with the Ignorance of the Doctrines of Religion, and of things necessary to be believed in order to Salvation. So that *Implicit Faith* in the *Papish* Sense, is that whereby the Laity, who either know not, or as yet do not understand the Articles of Faith, do believe implicitly in this General, *That all things are true which the Church of Rome believes and holds*

An Implicit Faith what.

as true. But in such a sense *Implicit Faith* is by no means tolerable; (1.) Because this is not a *Divine* but *Human* Faith, built upon a rotten Foundation, viz. the Authority of Men subject to Error, and consequently so fallacious that no Man who valued his Salvation would rely upon it. (2.) We are commanded in Scripture to get Knowledge for our selves, to try all things, and hold fast that which is good¹, that so we may beware of false Prophets that come in Sheeps Clothing², &c. and not believe every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God³. This is our indispensable Duty, and no Excuse will serve the Turn if we are negligent therein.

Two Objections
answer'd.

To this they make two Objections: First, they say that the Priests of their Church stake down their own Souls for the Truth of their Doctrine. *Ans.* (1.) There is no relying safely on such a Security; for it is possible that this Surety may be so far indebted to the Divine Justice by his own Sins, as not to be able to discharge himself from Guilt and Condemnation, and how then can he be responsible for the Errors of others? (2.) God denies to accept of any such Security, but will make a Retribution to every Man according to his own Works⁴. (3.) Nor is it a certain evidence that any Doctrine is true, because the Teacher of it pledges his own Soul for it; but only, that he himself does not in the least question the Truth of his Doctrine. Nor has the Church of Rome any Preeminence herein over the rest of the Churches, since every Christian Teacher is bound to lay down his Life for the Profession of his Doctrine.

Again the *Romanists* object, That the Understanding ought to be brought into Captivity⁵, which cannot be where Knowledge is required. *Ans.* The contrary to this is true, viz. That because the Understanding is to be brought into Captivity, therefore a Knowledge is required of those things, which the Understanding ought to be subjected to; else this

¹ 1 Cor. 14. 20. Eph. 5. 15. ² 1 Theff. 5. 21. ³ Mat. 7. 15. ⁴ 1 John. 4. 1. ⁵ Gal. 9. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10. ⁶ 2 Cor. 10. 5.

Captivity would not be a rational, but a blind and brutal one. Thus the Understanding of Man is brought into Captivity, when relying on Divine Revelation it searches for true Wisdom in that alone, laying aside its own Wisdom, which he finds is no true Guide to the supreme Good. And 'tis after this manner that the Apostle brought every Understanding into Captivity to the Obedience of Christ; drawing Men to the Christian Faith by the Efficacy of his Doctrine and the power of Miracles, that denying their own Wisdom with which they were puffed up, they might yield themselves the Disciples of Christ, and learn out of his Gospel true Wisdom for the Salvation of their own Souls.

S E C T. II.

Of Assent, the Formal Act of Faith, and its Adjunct Assurance.

The *Formal Act of Faith* is *Assent*, which ought to *Assent the* have a close Connection with *Knowledge*; since with-*Formal* out it *Knowledge* is unavailable to Salvation, it being *Act of Faith* to be seen not only in many wicked Men, but also in the Devils themselves. But every kind of *Assent* is not sufficient; that which is truly an Act of Faith must be solid and firm, founded on the rational Judgment of the Will, produced in us by a serious and accurate Meditation of those things, which render us fully persuaded of the certainty of what we are to believe. Any other *Assent* raised upon slight Grounds cannot be effectual or lasting, 'tis rather Opinion than *Faith*, more a blind than a rational Obedience, and rather a brutal *Impetus* of the Mind than sound Judgment.

The Object of *Faith* in general ought, (1.) to be *its Object* the TRUTH; for no Man can be obliged to be-in general, lieve a LYE, and God himself who is faithful and Truth. holy, nay TRUTH it self, cannot injoin any Man

1 Luk. 12. 47. Tit. 1. 16. 2 Luk. 4. 33, 34. Acts 16. 17. to

to give his Assent to a L Y E. (2.) Those things are only to be believed, which God in his Word declares to be true; for *Faith* is an *Assent* relying on the Testimony of God, but he neither does nor can declare what is false to be true. (3.) The Divine Law does not command us to err, because every Error is repugnant to the Divine Rectitude; but to believe a Falseness is to err. (4.) Lastly it would follow, if the Object of *Faith* can be a Falseness, Divine Faith may sometimes be an Error, viz. an *Assent* to what is false; which is egregiously absurd.

God cannot
oblige a
Man to be-
lieve a
Lye.

This we thought fit to observe, in opposition to some Divines, who for the maintenance of this their Doctrine [That the Reprobate are bound to believe that Christ died for them, tho he did not] are not ashamed openly to assert, that God can, nay sometimes does oblige a Man to believe that which is false: nay they are not afraid, for the defence of this horrid and blasphemous Notion, to invent some Pretences for it: *Adam* (say they) was obliged in his State of Innocence to believe that he shou'd obtain Eternal Life which was false. *Ans.* *Adam* was not bound to believe this absolutely, but only conditionally, if he persevered in that State; else he could not have believed the Divine Threatning, that in the Day where in he should eat of the forbidden Fruit, he should surely die. Again they urge, that *Abraham* was bound to believe, that God was willing he should sacrifice his Son; but this was likewise false. *Ans.* (1.) This Command is expressly called a *Temptation* and consequently is of a quite different nature from the rest of the Divine Precepts; unless they will be as hardy as to say, that God when he commands the Reprobate to believe in Christ, does it only to tempt them. (2.) Properly speaking, *Abraham* was not commanded to believe that God was willing that he should really kill his Son, but only that he should sacrifice him. This latter he did believe, and accordingly prepared himself to obey the Command; but it was not his business to enquire whether God intended that he should really kill his Son, or whether he commanded it only to try him.

The *Object* of a *Christian Faith* in particular is every *Truth* necessary to be believed in order to eternal Salvation: But whereas this is comprehended under one single Truth, that *Jesus is the Christ*, therefore that alone in Scripture is commonly said to be the *Object* of a *Christian's Faith*, as if nothing besides was required of us to believe. This is expressed under various Terms in Scripture, all amounting to this, "That *Jesus of Nazareth* who preach'd the Gospel in *Judea*, excelled in Miracles, was crucified, rose the third day from the Dead, and ascended into Heaven, was the *Christ*, or the Saviour promised before by the Prophets, and to be owned as such."

But it is worth our while to enquire more distinctly what is necessarily required for our believing that *Jesus is the Christ*. Now this Proposition, *Jesus is the Christ*, which is the *Object* of a saving Faith, comprehends two things, the *Subject*, *Jesus*, and the *Predicate*, *Christ*; the one denoting the Person, the other the Office of our Saviour.

The *Predicate* of the Proposition is *Christ*, or the *Son of God*; which according to the usual Stile of the Writers of the New Testament, signifies the *Messiah* promised to the *Jews*, by whom Salvation was to be obtained: Who not only directed us in the way that leads to Eternal Life, but also by his accursed Death delivered us from the Curse, being made a Propitiatory Sacrifice for us, strengthens us by his Spirit against all the Insults and Temptations of the Devil, and at last by his Almighty Power will raise us from the Dead, and bring us to Eternal Life and Glory. This Dignity is sometimes expressed by the word *Christ*, sometimes by the *Son of God*, which are equivalent in the Scripture-Phrase. The Words of *David* seem to have given rise to this Title, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; and again, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me*

Mat. 16. 16. Joh. 20. 3. Acts 8. 37. i Joh. 5. 1. Rom. 9. 5. Acts 16. 31. Joh. 3. 16—36. Ps. 2. 7.

a Son¹: Which Expressions were applied by the Apostles to the *Messiah*² in a more sublime and mystical Sense, and so understood by the *Jews*. This is evident from the Acknowledgment of *Nathaniel*³, *Peter*⁴, the other *Disciples*⁵, and the Eunuch of *Candace*⁶: But the greatest Testimony of all is that which *Jesus* himself gives us of this Truth when he was examin'd by the High Priest⁷, and which he confirms in another place⁸. To believe then that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, or the *Son of God*, signifies nothing else than that *Jesus* is that extraordinary Saviour promised so long before, to whom the Office of saving Men was committed by the Father, in which Office he was inaugurated by being anointed with the Holy Ghost.

2. The
Subject,
Jesus.

As to the Subject of this Proposition, the full and perfect Knowledge thereof does not seem to be absolutely necessary for the Truth and Evidence of it. True it is, the Person to whom the Office of a Saviour is committed by God, ought to be apprehended, who is denoted by the Name of *JESUS*; which Name signifies a certain Man Anointed by God the Father, and installed in that Office. But whether this Person consists of two Natures, one *Eternal* and *Divine*, the other *Human*, both united in one Person, has no reference to the Truth of this Proposition, but ought to be enquired after in other Places of Scripture.

The Eter-
nal Filiation
not a
necessary
Object of
Christian
Faith.

We do indeed believe that this Person is the *Son of God*, upon the account of his Divine Nature, and the *Eternal Filiation*; but whether this *Filiation* be the Object of a Christian's Faith, cannot be concluded from this Proposition, but must be proved from other places of Scripture. Since therefore no Text, as we know of, maintains that the Union of the Divine with the Human Nature is the necessary Object of Faith; and the Office of Christ is to be believed concerning *Jesus*; yet tho we own and acknowledg this Truth,

¹ 2 Sam. 7. 14. ² Acts 13. 33. Heb. 1. 5. ³ Joh. 1. 50.
⁴ Mat. 16. 16. Luk. 9. 20. ⁵ Mat. 14. 33. ⁶ Acts 8. 37.
⁷ Mat. 26. 33. ⁸ John 10. 34, 35, 36.

we dare not say 'tis necessary to be believed in order to Salvation: And that for these two Reasons; (1.) Because this Doctrine is so full of Obscurities and Niceties, that the most learned and wise have taken pains to no purpose, after all confessing their Ignorance in this matter. Now 'tis not at all likely that God should annex our Salvation to a Doctrine so obscure and intricate, that hardly one in a thousand, perhaps no Man, can distinctly apprehend. (2.) Because without the special Knowledge of the two Natures in Christ, and the manner of their being united, we may believe that *Jesus is the Christ*; that is, we may have a right Apprehension of the Office, tho we have not a full and clear Knowledg of the Person of Jesus, as he is *God-Man*.

But there are some Christians, viz. the more rigid ANABAPTISTS of foreign Parts, who require that in order to make it an essentially saving Faith, we shou'd believe that the Eternal Word of the Father was made *Flesh*, i.e. that the very Divine Essence of the Word was changed and transubstantiated into *Flesh*. But these Men are egregiously mistaken: For (1.) The Scripture does not inform us of any such manner of our Lord's *Incarnation*; and tho we should grant what is not to be granted, that some things are somewhere contain'd in Scripture in favour of this Opinion, yet it wou'd not from thence follow, that in it consists the Essence of a saving Faith. (2.) This Faith is not necessary for the acknowledging our Jesus to be the Christ, or for believing in and obeying him; nay it has no respect to Piety, or Obedience to the Divine Commands, since a saving Faith produces this of it self, being that which overcometh the World'. (3.) It may be prejudicial to Piety, since it tends to the destruction of the Article concerning the Resurrection of the Dead; for since his Resurrection is the Foundation of ours, and according to them the *Flesh* of Christ is of another nature than ours, what hope can we have of being raised again, from the Consideration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ? And be-

*Nor the
Eternal
Word made
Flesh.*

1 Joh. 5. 4.

ing deprived of such a Hope, our Piety must needs sink to the ground.

But the
Offices of
Christ, as
Prophet,
Priest and
King.

Since therefore the *Object* of a Christian's Faith does properly regard the *Offices* of Christ, Faith in a Profession of them is also necessary; for by them Christ is, and without the Knowledge of them the Worship due to God and Christ cannot be performed. Now these *Offices* are, as we elsewhere observed, the *Prophetical, Priestly and Kingly*, to which our Faith must be applied. (1.) As to the *Prophetical Office*, by Faith we believe *Jesus* was a true Teacher sent forth from God; by whom alone, or by whose Gospel alone, the full Knowledge of the Divine Will is to be sought for, and whose Doctrine is to be received, with a full persuasion of Mind, That if we obey his Precepts, we shall attain the Salvation promised to us by him. (2.) As to his *Sacerdotal Office*, we are to believe, that by his own Blood shed for us here for the Remission of Sins, he is enter'd into the Heavenly Sanctuary, there to offer up himself continually, and intercede for us. Which Oblation and Intercession is of so great Avail, as to obtain a plenary Expiation of all our Sins, and on whose single Sacrifice we are to rely, in exemption of all other Mediators. (3.) As to his *Kingly Office*, we must believe, that he is risen from the Dead, taken up into Heaven, where he has Power over all things both in Heaven and Earth; governs us by his Word and Spirit, protects and defends us against all Temptations and Adversities, and at last, if we persevere in Faith and Obedience, will advance us to Eternal Felicity.

True Faith
consistent
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Beside these, many other things are usually enquired into about the *Offices* of *Jesus Christ*; however they are not all necessary to Salvation, but only such as without which the Worship due to God and *Jesus Christ* cannot consist. Now if any one with sincerity admits of those things, he is endued with a saving and true Faith, tho he should err in some matters of less moment.

What is
contained
in this
Assent.

Having thus at large explained the Nature of a saving Faith, it appears that there are two things contained in it in general. (1.) Some Truths which God affirms to us, and to which he requires our Assent.

(2.) Some

(2.) Some Duties which he enjoins us under a promised Reward, and a threatned Punishment. From hence arise two Acts of Faith; First, an Assent applied to God, who affirms such things as we suppose to be credible. And secondly, such an Assent as is given to God, who commands that those things we know to be credible, we should look upon to be most certain. From hence 'tis easy to solve that Question which is usually started, whether Faith be the Act of the Understanding or Will? To which we answer, That 'tis not a mere Act either of the Understanding or the Will, but a mixt one, partly of the one and partly of the other.

To an *Assent*, as its necessary Adjunct, flowing from it, is annex'd *Assurance*; which is not only a strong Hope, but *Confidence*, whereby we are ascertain'd that we shall attain to Eternal Salvation according to the Divine Promise. That this *Assurance* is an Act of Faith, appears from hence, that 'tis nothing else but a firm Assent of one, who without dispute relies on the Divine Promises.

As to the *Object* of this *Assurance*, a great Question *its Object* is started: The *Contra-Remonstrants* maintain that 'tis *not a special Mercy* of God, whereby he irrevocably has elected some certain Persons to Salvation, without any regard had to their Faith, and has sent Christ as their Saviour, who has made satisfaction for their Sins; and therefore they make the Righteousness of Christ performed for the Elect the *Object* of Faith. Now this Opinion is very absurd; since (1.) there is no such *special Mercy* in God, the Promise annexed to the Divine Covenant being universal, and under the Condition of Faith and Obedience'. (2.) Nor could such a special Mercy be promised to Man, because according to their Opinion, it was before the Promise peculiar to the Elect, as being destined to them from all Eternity, by virtue of the Divine Decree. (3.) It is not a Mercy which happens to the Elect for the sake of Christ, of which nature however are all the Blessings, which are the Object of a Christian's

¹Joh. 3. 16. 1 Joh. 1. 7.

Assurance or Faith; but Christ was given to the Elect for the sake of that Mercy. (4.) Such a Faith is destructive of Piety, because it takes away the necessity thereof, in order to our attaining the Divine Promises: For if God without any regard had to Faith or Piety has predestinated Eternal Life to the Elect, what necessity is there of believing and obeying, that they might attain a Happiness, irrevocably destined to them, without any consideration of Faith or Obedience?

But his
Universal
and Con-
ditional
Mercy.

The Object therefore of Assurance is the *Universal Mercy of God*, offered to all Men, provided they believe in Christ, and live according to the Rule he has prescribed them: So that this Assurance is the Act of Man, whereby he steadfastly believes that God will pardon his Sins, and bestow upon him Eternal Life, if he believes in and obeys his Son *Jesus Christ*. This Assurance is the immediate Product of Assent; for the Believer giving his Assent to the Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, whereby Eternal Life is promised to all Men on the Conditions of Faith and Obedience, does hence, by a Reflection made to himself, trust, That Eternal Life will likewise be bestowed upon him by Christ, provided he believes and obeys.

S E C T. III.

Of the Consequential Act of Faith, Obedience.

Its conse-
quential
Act, Obe-
dience.

The *Consequential Act*, or rather the immediate Effect of Faith, is *Obedience*, which proceeds from the former; for he who believes with Assurance, that God will bestow Eternal Life on the Believing and Obedient Soul, will also obey God, that he may attain that Life. And because the Virtue and Efficacy of Faith shews forth it self in such an Obedience, hence it is called the Life of Faith, without which Faith is ineffectual to Salvation, nay is accounted as no Faith*.

* Jam. 2. 14. * 1 Joh. 2. 4.

To make this the more plain, we must consider the *The Nature* Nature of Faith a little more thorowly. The Apostle *of Faith.* Heb. 11. 1. tells us, that *Faith is the υπόστασις, the Substance of things hop'd for, the ελεγχος, the Evidence or Conviction of things not seen;* because by its Certainty and Solidity it bestows a sort of Being on things future which do not as yet exist, and places and presents them as it were before the Eyes of the Believer. For Faith takes it for granted that future good things will at one time or other be present; and by this Representation it renders them as efficacious, as if they were really present. Now those future Blessings are Eternal Life, the Beatifick Vision, and all the other Enjoyments of the other World, in opposition to Eternal Death, Misery and Torment.

If then Faith renders future things as efficacious as if they were present, it follows that one who has such a stedfast Faith must obey Christ: *i. e.* He who believes with a firm Faith, that he shall attain those Blessings, if he obeys Christ according to the Rule prescribed him in the Gospel; and if he is disobedient, must suffer Eternal Death and Misery, and represents this future Happiness or Misery to himself as present and before his Eyes, will certainly pay a ready Obedience to his great Master's Commands. Now the reason is plainly this: Because there is no Comparison to be made between the Enjoyments of this World, whereby we are tempted to sin, and the Happiness of a future State; nor between the Pain we may suffer in restraining our Appetites, and the Eternal Torment of Hell-fire. For all the things of this Life are of an inconstant, transitory nature, and perish even in the Enjoyment: But Eternal Life is a solid, lasting, and perfect Happiness. What can be compared to it in this World? Can the good things of it? Alas! no: They are of a fading perishing nature, and have too great an Alloy of Unhappiness and Misery, which render them unsatisfactory Enjoyments. Can the Evils of it? No; they are not to be compared to the Glory which shall hereafter be reveal'd, nor do they bear any proportion to Eternal Misery. True it is, we are most affected with those Objects that are present, and strike immediately upon our Senses; and this is the great

great Cause why so many who walk by Sight not by Faith, are carnal and mind worldly things. But the Man who by the Eye of Faith brings those future Enjoyments closer to himself, and beholds them as if present, must needs be more strongly affected with this View, than with all the Allurements offer'd him by the false appearance and glittering of the perishable Enjoyments of this World: and consequently such an one will be inclined to pay a ready Obedience, when he has such powerful Motives to excite him thereto.

*A Query
answered.*

But here it may be asked, whether a sound Judgment can be made of any Man's *Faith* by his *Obedience*, so that whoever does not live conformably to the Gospel, ought to be esteem'd as having no Faith? *Answ.* *Faith* may be consider'd either as a *Habit*, or as an *Act*. In the former sense *Faith* is consider'd in the general, and may be perfect, tho it does not produce Works of Obedience. For notwithstanding the *Habit* of *Faith*, it may so happen that a Man allur'd by the Sweetness of present Enjoyments, may be pinion'd down to them, and so disregard the Happiness of Heaven, as not to exert his Virtue in resisting the Prevalency of his Lusts; which might have been done, if Faith had had its perfect Work. But *Faith* consider'd in the latter sense, as actually apprehending future good things, if it be solid and strong, cannot be barren of good Works: and consequently a neglect of what is good, and a customary doing of Evil, is a certain and infallible Sign of a Man's having no true and found Faith in him.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Causes and Effects of Faith.

*God the efficient
Cause of
Faith.*

The Primary and Efficient Cause of Faith is God, from whom, as from the Father of Lights, every good and perfect Gift cometh'. But the Divine Gifts are various; some are bestowed by God absolutely on Men,

' Jam. 1. 17.

without any Operation requir'd on Man's part; such as Creation, Preservation, Redemption, &c. Others are given by him, but then the Labour of Man is requisite for his obtaining them; thus God gives Corn, but the Industry of the Husbandman must be us'd in sowing the Grain in the Earth: Others again are commanded by God, for the performance of which he bestows upon us sufficient Helps; but the free Obedience of Man is requir'd, whereby he obeys, by the Divine Assistance, the Commands of God, and so obtains the Gift offer'd to him: and of this nature are *Faith* and *Repentance*.

Faith is not then such a Divine Gift as is wrought in us without our Co-operation, nor a Habit infus'd into us by God; but an Act of our Obedience, proceeding from the Will, which is excited and assisted by the Divine Grace. This will more evidently appear if we consider the following Particulars: (1.) *Faith* is commanded us by God, with the addition of a promis'd Reward, and a threatned Punishment: But Habits infus'd by God cannot be prescrib'd to Man, because they cannot be reckon'd as his Acts. (2.) *Faith* proceeds from hearing the Word of God; but a Habit infus'd by him proceeds not from Hearing, but from the Divine Omnipotent Power. (3.) If *Faith* were a Habit infus'd into us by God, then we should be Believers before we actually believe; which is absurd. (4.) *Faith* is according to the Scripture-Acceptation taken wholly as an Act of Obedience, as being commanded; but an infus'd Habit is not so, being produc'd by an external Principle. (5.) With respect to an infus'd Habit the Will is purely passive, which is repugnant to the Nature of the Will and a free Obedience. (6.) *Faith* would at this rate be the entire Work of God alone, and Man would contribute nothing at all to the first Production of it, and so in some sense God might be said to believe in us. (7.) And lastly, The Reason why some do not believe, would not be a Man's own fault, but it lies upon God in not infusing into him the Habit of *Faith*.

1. Joh. 3. 36. Rom. 10. 9. Eph. 4. 22, &c.

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But an Act
at the ve-
ry first.

Objections
answered.

We therefore say that *Faith* is at the very first an Act even of the Will, not indeed acting by its own natural Faculty alone, but excited and render'd capable of Believing by the Divine Grace preventing and assisting it: that by many repeated Acts a perfect Habit of Faith is wrought in us.

Contrary to this Opinion 'tis objected, " (1.) That if Faith be an Act, then that whereby a regenerate differs from an unregenerate Man, must be attributed to our Actions; which are not permanent, but transient and inconstant. (2.) It will follow that the Regenerate when they sleep and do not actually believe, do displease God, and are not in a State of Grace, since without Faith it is impossible to please God. (3.) Nor can Men persist in Grace, so much as for one night, whilst they are out of Action."

Ans. All these Objections may be solv'd by one single Reply, which is this: That all our Actions contribute something towards a Habit, and that every first Act is a Beginning of it; especially if that first Act be not single, but compounded of many other Acts concurring in the Production thereof. For such Acts are the Beginning of a Habit, and tend so far to Perfection, that in a short time by some subsequent Acts the Habit becomes compleat. Of this nature is *Faith*, for the producing of which not one single, but several concurrent Acts are requisite, viz. A Knowledge of the Divine Will, a Judgment pass'd after a nice Inquisition into the Reasons and Grounds of our Faith, and an Inclination of the Will in assenting to those Reasons. Such an Act cannot be perform'd without the manifest Beginning of a Habit; and so the very first Act of Faith, if it does not leave a perfect, yet at least leaves a Habit begun behind it, which is continually carried on to perfection by subsequent Acts. Hence it is plain that the Difference between a Believer and an Infidel consists not in Actions only, but in the Habit; so that Believers, tho they do not actually believe in their Sleep, yet are endued with the Habit of Faith, and remain in the Favour, as well as under the Protection of God.

The Instrument or Means God makes use of whereby to produce *Faith* in us, is his *Word*, whether spoken

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ken by him, or committed to writing, and read or explain'd by Men; which is always attended with the spiritual Influence of the Holy Ghost. Now this Word not only requires *Faith*, but likewise contains in it many Reasons and Tokens, by which a Man may be certain of the Divinity thereof. These Arguments are not only the Sanctity of the Doctrine, and Excellency of the Promises, but likewise Miracles of all kinds, for the Confirmation of that Doctrine, and several other things which tend to establish the Divine Authority of the Scriptures.

*Its Instru-
ment the
Word of
God.*

Now whoever rightly considers the Nature of *Faith*, that it is a voluntary Act of Obedience, will be far from expecting on God's part such Arguments for the producing of Faith, as are *mathematically demonstrable* and self-evident; but only such as are convincing to sincere and teachable Minds, and against which nothing can be urg'd. For *Faith* ought to be fix'd on a solid Foundation, else it would be no wonder if all Men were Infidels; nor can our Salvation depend on a sandy Bottom. True it is, there are several things in Christianity which seem at first blush to be absurd to a carnal Reasoner; as that *Jesus of Nazareth* crucified by the *Jews* is the *Christ*, in whom we ought to believe; that the Cross and Afflictions are the direct Road to Eternal Happiness, &c. But by the Resurrection of our Saviour from the Dead, and his Ascension into Heaven, all this is so abundantly evinc'd, that there is no room left for doubting of it. However the Nature of *Faith* does not require such evident Arguments as should remove all manner of pretence for prevaricating: for then it would not be an Act of free Obedience, nor consequently deserve Praise or a Reward. By this then it is plain, that God by the means of his Word does not so work *Faith* in us, but that a teachable Disposition is requir'd on Man's part, that the Operation of the Word may be effectual. This is all along recommended by our Saviour in St. *John's* Gospel¹, and it requires that the

¹ Ch. 3. 20, 21. & Ch. 7. 17. & Ch. 8. 47. & Ch. 10. 26, 27.

Mind should be free from *Passion*, *Prejudice* and *Malice*, the three main Obstacles of a Christian Faith. *Passion* disturbs, and draws a Veil over the Mind, that it cannot discern the Truth: *Prejudice* has such a Prepossession in our Minds, and so strong a Bias on our Judgments, that so long as we are sway'd by it, we cannot but think, and judg just as it directs and inclines us: But *Malice* is the greatest Hindrance of all. For the Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, to which we are by Faith to assent, is diametrically opposite to the Lusts of the Flesh, prescribing the Denial and Mortification of them, and requiring that our Righteousness should exceed that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; with the Promises of Eternal Life, and future Enjoyments annexed unto it. These Precepts are ungrateful, these Promises unknown to Flesh and Blood, which cannot tell how to hope for any such things; its Desire is only bent upon present Enjoyments, which it sees, and feels, and tastes, and is sensible of: no wonder then if the *Carnal Mind*, besotted with sensual Pleasures, has no relish for the Christian Religion, no Knowledge of Spiritual things, and no Inclination to believe in a future State, or in *Jesus* the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

In what
sense Justification is
attributed
to Faith.

Hitherto we have consider'd the *Causes* of *Faith*, a word or two now of its *Effects*. We have already demonstrated that good Works are the genuine Effects of *Faith*: But besides them, *Justification* is likewise attributed to it in Scripture, especially in the Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*; tho this be not the Effect of Faith after the same manner that good Works are. For Faith does not produce in us *Justification*, as the *Efficient Cause* of it, that being the internal and judicial Act of God; nor is it the *Meritorious Cause* of *Justification*, since Faith excludes all Merit. How Faith produces *Justification*, is therefore a controverted Point. Some there are who teach us that Faith in the Business of *Justification* is taken by way of *Metonymy* for its Object, viz. the Righteousness of Christ; so that by being justified by Faith, we are to understand being justified by Christ's Righteousness, as it is apprehended and apply'd to the Believer by Faith. But they would not have this Faith to be an Act of our Obe-

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Obedience, but only a means of apprehending the Righteousness of Christ, oppos'd to Faith as it is an Act. This Opinion labours under a great many Difficulties, and does not seem to be consistent with it self. (1.) Because 'tis unusual for Faith to be taken in Scripture by way of *Metonymy* for its Object; nor can any one Instance be produc'd of such a Signification, tho' some are urg'd by Men of that side, which are misunderstood, and as wrongly applied by them. (2.) 'Tis unconceivable, how Faith can be the Means of apprehending Christ's Righteousness, and not be our Act. (3.) Nor is the Righteousness of Christ properly imputed to us, but for the sake of it is God pleas'd to justify us. Faith therefore in those Epistles can admit of no other sense, than that it is a Condition prescrib'd us by God in order to attain *Justification*, not by any Virtue or Merit of its own, but by the gracious Promise of God, by which he is willing of to impute Faith to us as Righteousness for the sake of Christ. Nay, Faith is so far from not being an Act Obedience in the Business of Justification, that it implies the Works it produces, and the whole Evangelical Obedience. But these short hints may suffice for the present, designing hereafter when we come to treat particularly of *Justification*, to handle this Point more at large.

S E C T. V.

Of the several Branches into which Faith is divided.

Faith is commonly distinguished into an *Historical*, *The vulgar* a *Temporary*, a *Justifying*, and a *Faith of Miracles*. *Distinction* This Distinction might be admitted, if the several *of Faith* Parts of it are said to differ not in kind but de- *how far* gree. For an *Historical*, and a *Temporary Faith*, *allowable.* as they term it, differs only in degree from that which is *Justifying*. As to a *Temporary Faith*, 'tis not a Scriptural Expression, that taking notice only of the Faith of some temporizing Men, who fell away when Persecution arose for the Gospel's sake.

sake'. But that even this Faith differ'd only in degree from a *Justifying* one, and was a true Faith, appears from hence: (1.) Because they are threatned with a forer Condemnation if they fall from the Faith*; now what occasion would there have been for a more grievous Punishment, for forsaking a Faith that was not true, saving, and which would necessarily cease? (2.) Nor is Perseverance essential to, but the Consequence of Faith; else no Man can be said to be a Believer before his Death.

*Faith of
Miracles
what.*

As to the *Faith of Miracles*, this I confess is a distinct kind of Faith, and such as does not affect all Men at all times: for 'tis a peculiar Gift of working Miracles, which is not communicated to all. However this is not without an *Historical Faith*, but is a more eminent degree of it. Now this Faith is twofold; the former *Active*, whereby a Man stedfastly relies upon God, that some Miracle will be wrought at his Desire and Intreaty, of which our Saviour and St. Paul makes mention: the latter *Passive*, by which he believes that a Miracle will be wrought in him by the means of another Person, whom he fully believes to be sent by God. This was the Condition which our Saviour frequently requir'd of those on whom, and for whose sake he wrought his Miracles; as appears by those Expressions recorded in the Gospel, where he says, *Dost thou believe that I am able to do this? According to thy Faith be it unto thee, &c.*

1. *Faith ei-
ther Lively
or Dead.*

But not to insist on this *Faith of Miracles*, which was a Gift of God peculiar to those Times where-in they were wrought, we distinguish *Faith*, according to the Acceptation of it in Scripture, into a *Lively* and a *Dead Faith*. A *Lively Faith* is that which produces good Works, and thereby attains Justification; whilst a *Dead Faith* is destitute of Works, and consequently is ineffectual for the obtaining of Justification. Now these differ only in degree, and the Effects of both; all Faith consider'd in it self being dead, till Works quicken it, tho before

* Mat. 13. 21. * Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. * Mat. 21. 21. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

them it is a true and sound Faith. For (1.) the Apostle tells us; *Thou believest that there is one God, thou lovest well*; tho that Faith was without Works. (2.) The same Apostle does in part attribute Justification to such a Faith; *Ye then see* (says he) *how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only*. (3.) Abraham's Faith was genuine, tho it preceded his Works; and yet it could not justify him without Works.

We shall now reply to an Objection that may be made to what we have advanced. A *Dead Faith* (say they) is no true Faith; as a Dead Man is not truly a Man. *Ans.* (1.) Faith is not stiled *Dead* upon the account of its Nature, but Effects. (2.) A *Dead Faith* is not compared to a dead Man, but to a Body without a Soul; which is a real Body, tho it exerts no vital Action: and so is Faith without Works a true Faith, tho it be fruitless and unavailable to Eternal Life. (3.) A Body, if animated with a Spirit, would be a living Body; so Faith by the addition of good Works becomes lively, and is conducive to Salvation.

Faith is likewise divided, according to the degrees of it, into a *Strong* and a *Weak* Faith: which takes place in all the four Acts of it, viz. *Knowledge, Assent, Assurance, and Obedience*. (1.) With respect to *Knowledge*, That is a *Weak* Faith, which knows only the Rudiments and first Principles of Christianity; or which has not as yet attained a thorow Apprehension of some one Doctrine of great moment in Religion. On the contrary, they have a *Strong* Faith, who have made a considerable Proficiency in the Knowledge of the Gospel; who to their Knowledge of things necessary have added that of things useful, and being fully persuaded of the Certainty of them, can give an account of the Hope that is in them, and convince the Gainsayers. (2.) With respect to *Assent*, That is a *Weak* Faith, which is either backward, or rash and injudicious, in assenting to those things which God has reveal'd to us in the Gospel, whether Promises or Threatnings, or any thing else which is remote from our Senses. On the contrary, that is a *Strong* Faith,

* Jam. 2. 19. * Ibid. v. 24. * Ibid. v. 21.

which

which assents not only readily, but also with Judgment to all the Mysteries of the Christian Religion, tho above our Comprehension; which could not have been discover'd by Natural Reason, but are knowable by Divine Revelation only. (3.) With respect to *Assurance*, his is a *Weak* Faith, who is with some difficulty brought to rely upon God and Christ in Adversity, and whose Mind being fearful does not fully acquiesce in God and his Providence; such a *Weak* Faith as this were the Disciples', *Peter*', and the Father of him that was possess'd', endued with. Whilst on the other hand their Faith is *Strong*, who depend stedfastly upon God, expecting a Completion of the Divine Promises, overlook all Obstacles and Difficulties, and cast not away their Confidence, tho they can see no natural Means for the obtaining of the thing hoped for. (4.) With respect to *Obedience*, that is a *Weak* Faith, which does not produce the requisite Fruits of good Works, but is deficient in many things: On the contrary, that is a *Strong* Faith which makes us pay a willing and extraordinary Obedience to God, even in things that are not only uneasy to Flesh and Blood, but also seem to thwart our Expectation of the Promises of God.

A Caution. However this is to be observed: As those Acts of Faith are subordinate to one another, the former being the Foundation of the rest that follow; so the Weakness or Imperfection of the antecedent Act renders the subsequent Act weak also; but not *vice versa*. That is, he who is *weak* in *Knowledg*, will be so likewise in *Assent*, *Assurance*, and *Obedience*; but it does not follow that he who is *weak* in the last, is so in the first of these Acts. But this is to be understood only of that point of Doctrine, in the Knowledg of which a Man is weak. For in other Cases, one who is ignorant of many things, may and often does assent to the Fundamentals of Religion, which he understands, and thereby is excited to a sincere Obedience. Hence it is that we see so many ignorant Souls excel in Piety, because they firmly believe the Divine Precepts and

† Mat. 8. 24, &c. ‡ Ch. 14. 28, &c. § Mar. 9. 22, &c.
Promises,

Promises, without nicely enquiring or apprehending the particular Doctrines of the Christian Religion.

Lastly, *Faith* with respect to Obedience may be said to be *Initial, Progressive, or Consummative* and *Perfect*. (1.) *Initial Faith* is that of *Beginners*, who do indeed assent to the Gospel, and heartily resolve to bid adieu to their Lusts, and endeavour after Holiness; but yet by the inveterate Habit of Sin so deeply rooted in them, they are put to some trouble and reluctance in conquering the Motions of it, the Flesh ever now and then rising up and fighting against the Spirit. And hence it sometimes happens that they relapse into Sin, but immediately recover themselves by Repentance, and renew their former Practice of Piety. (2.) We call a *Progressive Faith* that of those, who have made some Progress in Religion, who by the Benefit of Faith being for some time accustomed to a stricter Course of Life, abstain from Sin with more ease and less reluctance of the Flesh: However they still perceive some small strugglings of the Flesh against the Spirit, for the subduing of which they are chearfully to let themselves. (3.) A *Consummative or Perfect Faith* They are endued with, who being corroborated by a long Perseverance in Piety, and by the Assistance of Faith, not only meet with less Difficulties in the Practice of Religion, but also feel a certain sort of Pleasure and Delight in Vertue and in abstaining from Sin; nay, perceive as much reluctance against Sin, as the Beginners met with in their first Practice of Piety. These are called *Perfect*, not because they have attain'd a compleat Perfection, and are free from all the Defilements of Sin (since 'tis possible they may sometimes fall through Mistake, Infirmary, Inadvertency, or a sudden Passion, especially upon a strong Temptation offer'd) but because they have quite abandon'd all vicious Habits, and are no longer under the Power and Dominion of any one Sin.

These are all of them Believers and in a State of Salvation, since they are all fully inclin'd to do what-
ever they do, or can know to be commanded by God: which Resolution they all put into practice alike, tho in different degrees according to the proportion of their Strength. So that shou'd one newly converted

to the Faith, die before he has made any further Progress in it, he would be no less a Partaker of Eternal Happiness, than he who has attained to the second or third degree of Faith. However, should his Life be spared, he must press on to the other degrees of Perfection, else he is not to be accounted a Believer that heartily discharges his Duty, and truly endeavours to grow in Grace, and in the Knowledg, and Fear, and Love of God.

S E C T. VI.

Of the Opposites to Faith.

Opposites to Faith in general.

1. *In Defect, either Doubtfulness;*

The *Opposites to Faith* are such as affect *Faith in general*, or such as are contrary to that particular Act of it call'd *Assurance*. Again, the *Opposites to Faith in general* are some in the *Defect*, others in the *Excess*. Those in the *Defect* are either imperfectly, or else perfectly opposite thereto.

The *imperfect Opposite to Faith* is *Doubting*, which is a suspending of the Assent to, or a Hesitation about Divine things. Now this is not a mere Defect of the Understanding, which arises from an equal weight of the Arguments brought on both sides, and is faultless so long as the Ballance is kept in an even Poise, and no greater weight be added to sway it on either side: But it is chiefly a fault of the Will, when a Man will not give his Assent to a thing, unless convinc'd by demonstrative Arguments; tho there are other evidences enough to render the matter credible to a sincere and teachable Mind. *Faith* does not pretend to *Demonstration*, that belonging to *Science* only, but to *Credibility*: So that if a Man after all the Arguments us'd proper to persuade him that such or such a thing is credible, will not believe it, but withholds his Assent, he is guilty of that Doubtfulness or rather *Scepticism*, which is opposite to Faith, and will, if continued in, lead him directly to Infidelity. Let a Man then forbear indulging himself in such a captious Humour, for fear of the fatal Consequences thereof.

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The perfect Opposite to Faith is Incredulity, when a Man will not assent to a Divine Truth, tho he has an opportunity of assenting thereto : I say, tho he has an opportunity of assenting thereto, in exception of those to whom Christ was never reveal'd, and consequently had no opportunity of believing in him. I say, That he will not assent to the Truth, to intimate that Incredulity is chiefly an Act of the Will, in not assenting to a Truth when rendred credible to him by proper Arguments. Now this Incredulity is twofold: (1.) That which precedes, or rather excludes Faith, when they to whom the Gospel is preached, and who have an opportunity offered them of believing, yet reject it. (2.) That which follows Faith, when they who have for some time assented to the Gospel, will not afterwards assent to it. This is worse than the former, and their State is expressly said to be more miserable than the Infidels', and is usually call'd *Defection* or *Apostacy*. This *Defection*, if it consists in denying only some part of the Christian Religion, or some one Doctrine necessary to be believed in order to Salvation, tho it does not destroy and subvert all Religion, yet it is destructive of Salvation, and is commonly call'd HERESY, of which more hereafter: But if it consists in the Denial of the whole, or the principal part of the Christian Truth, upon which the whole Force of our Religion depends, then 'tis emphatically stiled *Ἀποστασία*, A POSTACY.

But whereas we have already shewn that the subsequent and inseparable Act of Faith is Obedience; it follows, that the abandoning a Pious and Christian course of Life, and relapsing into the Defilements of our former Conversation, is a falling from the Faith. A Believer then, and one that is regenerate, may depart from the Faith several ways. (1.) By being seduced into a false Opinion, and hearkning to the Doctrine of false Teachers and Deceivers. (2.) By the Allurements of this World and the Deceitfulness of Sin, which has likewise its Degrees, as first a Coldness or want of Charity, or an Omission of Works of Piety; and

then a Commission of the contrary Acts, either what is not a Sin in it self, but on the Confines of, and an Inducement thereto; or of Sins actually such, beginning with smaller ones, and going on to the more gross. (3.) By some great and sudden Temptation, often repeated, which by its Violence bends and forces the Mind to that which is proposed to it, and by frequent Assaults conquers the Will, and makes it commit the Act. (4.) By Persecution for the Gospel's sake, especially if it be more grievous and painful than ordinary: The fear of this may shock the Man, put him upon renouncing his Faith, and upon embracing his old course of Life again.

But as the Habit of Faith is not acquired, so neither is it lost in a moment, but by degrees 'tis weakned, till at last it expires. For (1.) the Habit of Faith is not immediately extinguished, but only broken by vicious Practices. (2.) An Assent to a Truth may for some time be lost, tho the Man degenerates into a contrary Habit of sinning. (3.) When this Assent is gone, some Knowledg may still remain in the Understanding, by which as a Spur a Man may sometimes be excited to re-assume new Strength, and to implore the Divine Assistance. (4.) If he does not this, and Impiety is got to its greatest height, then all Remedies become ineffectual, and the Man is at last deserted by God; who in just Judgment gives him over to strong Delusions, that he should believe a Lye, and be deliver'd up to the Power of Satan, to be led captive by him at his Will.

*Damnation
the Effect
of Incredulity.*

The Effect of Incredulity is Eternal Damnation, and an Exclusion from all hopes of Eternal Life; as is plain from sundry Passages of the New Testament. But the Effect of Apostacy is still a sorer Punishment; the case of such as fall into it being represented as desperate, *it being impossible to renew such again by Repentance*; and they are compar'd to a Man out of whom a wicked Spirit was cast, and into whom he entred again with a train of seven worse Spirits than himself.

* Joh. 3. 36. Mar. 16. 16. Joh. 3. 18, 19. & 8. 24.
 * 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. Heb. 10. 26, 27, 28, 29. † Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. ‡ Mat. 12. 44, 45, 46.

The *Opposite* to *Faith* in the *Excess* is too great a *Credulity*, whereby a Man without passing a previous Judgment, and examining the Reasons offer'd, is forward to assent to any Doctrine, and by this means embraces human Inventions and Errors instead of the Divine Truth. This usually proceeds from want of Experience and Wisdom; for Men who are ignorant of things, are easily imposed upon by the bare appearance of Credibility: which is the case of the meaner sort, who depend and rely wholly upon the Sayings and Opinions of their Teachers. Hence it is that they are sometimes *Inconstant*, carried about by every wind of Doctrine, by the cunning craftiness of Men, who lie in wait to deceive; and sometimes *Obstinate*, in adhering stiffly to an Opinion, the Truth of which they think they have sufficiently learned, tho they were blindly led into and wedded to it by the Authority of him that taught them.

The *Opposites* to *Faith*, as taken for *Assurance*, are likewise Faults, either in the *Defect* or the *Excess* thereof. To *Assurance* are opposed in the *Defect*, either (1.) A small Assurance, when a Man does not put that Confidence in God, and in Jesus Christ, which he ought to do, considering the Circumstances he is in, and the Arguments used to excite him to a stronger Assurance. Or (2.) *Diffidence*, which is a total renouncing of Assurance; when a Man puts not his Trust in God, tho he has sufficient grounds for so doing. This Distrust is an Affront offered to the Power, Goodness, Wisdom and Veracity of God, since it puts no Confidence on the express Promises of God, as if he were not able, or willing, or faithful, or wise enough to perform what he had promised.

But it is possible, (1.) That in the Business of Salvation, a weak or small Assurance may sometimes proceed from a pious Cause, viz. from a Mind desirous of Salvation, but finding in it self still some Defects remaining, or at least not very well satisfied of its own Conitancy. Hence arise those Scruples which some Men make, whether they have a true Faith in God, whether they obey him as they ought, whether they are in a State of Salvation, or not,

&c. Now all these Jealousies might be removed, would they but examine the Frame and Temper of their own Minds, and duly consider the Nature of the new Covenant made between God and us; wherein he is no hard Master, requires no more than he has given, and is ready to give larger Measures of his Grace to those who sincerely make use of what they have, and desire it of him in Prayer. (2.) It is possible that this Uncertainty or weak Assurance may in some Men proceed from a mere Error of the Understanding, in that they have not a right Apprehension of the Nature of Faith, and know not how to distinguish it from its Effects. For since Remission of Sins, and Peace of Conscience is promised to Believers, those Men conclude themselves destitute of Faith, and dare not apply the Hopes of Salvation to themselves, because sometimes they are troubled in Mind, or at least are not sensible of that Joy, which is (as they think) peculiar to the Faithful. Now this Error or Uncertainty might be removed by duly distinguishing between Faith, and its Consequences or Effects. For First, "Faith is a strong Assent of the Mind, whereby we believe that *Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ*, sent into the World by the Father, as the true and only Saviour: That in him alone God has reconciled the World to himself, by not imputing their Sins to them: And that this *Jesus* has received from the Father a Power of remitting Sins how great soever, and of bestowing the Spirit of Adoption upon all those who believe in him and sincerely obey his Commands; which Power he is ready, nay has solemnly promised to make use of, for the Salvation of his faithful Members." Secondly, As for Remission of Sins, it is the Consequence of Faith, being obtain'd by it. But then the being sensible of this Remission, with the Joy of the Holy Ghost that attends it, ought to be distinguished from Remission it self: For such a Sense, if not in time, yet in order of Nature, follows not only Faith, but also Remission, since it is a special Application of the Promise made in general to Believers. But thirdly, tho commonly the Faithful, to whom God has granted the Remission of Sins, are sensible thereof, by making

ing a closer Application of the Divine Promises to themselves, and are inwardly moved with a spiritual Joy at the certainty of being in such a State, wherein if they persevere they shall undoubtedly attain everlasting Salvation: Yet it may sometimes happen, that for a while they cannot perceive in their Breasts that inward Consolation and Satisfaction; whether it may arise from any false arguing of the Mind, or from the wise Disposal of God, in order to try their Faith and Constancy, and render it the more exemplary to others; or that by this means he might make known to them the greatness of this Spiritual Enjoyment; which is never better apprehended than by having the Sense of it withheld for a time, that they might be more fervent in their Prayers for it, and filled with a greater Joy, when that Blessing is granted to them. That God has a right of thus dealing with us, no Man can question, since he hereby withholds nothing that is expressly necessary to Salvation. For this Spiritual Joy is not prescribed to a Believer, as an indispensable Duty, but only Faith and Obedience: This Joy being a gratuitous Gift of God, whereby he rewards the Piety of Believers, and excites them to a further degree of loving it, by the Sense and Apprehension of a future Reward.

The *Opposite to Assurance*, which is criminal in the 2. In *Excess*, is *Over-Confidence* or *Presumption*; when a Man conceives an Assurance of obtaining Eternal Salvation, and supposes himself to be in the Favour of God, tho by reason of his Sins he ought to be afraid of an angry God, and to dread his Punishments; at least cannot apprehend such an Assurance, as he rashly arrogates to himself. Of this nature are those Men, who having led a profane and wicked Life without any Repentance, do yet in Sicknes, or at the point of Death, with the highest Assurance apply to themselves all the Promises made to the Faithful alone. We do not indeed deny but that even those Men, if they sincerely turn to God (and how hard a matter that is, every one cannot but be sensible) have some Refuge still left in the extraordinary Grace of God, whereby they may be encouraged and kept from fal-

ling into Despair. However we no where read of any Promises of Eternal Life made to such Men, by which they may with the same *αληγορία*, or *full Assurance* of Mind, apply Salvation to themselves, as the Faithful and truly Regenerate can. These Promises are only made to the truly penitent, who testify the sincerity of their Repentance, not only by Sorrow for, or Detestation of Sin, or by a barren Resolution of Amendment of Life, but by a real and thorow Change of their whole Lives¹. The Assurance therefore which those Men conceive, tho it may keep them from Despair, yet at most is inferiour to that of true Believers, which is founded on the clear Promises of God. Hence it is that applying the Divine Promises to themselves, they conceive a rash Assurance, whereby being deceived and render'd secure, they do not express such a humiliation of Mind and detestation of Sin as they ought; and consequently are not absolved of the Guilt, but whilst they promise Peace to themselves, they too often meet with unavoidable Destruction. To these Men the Words of the Apostle² are very applicable; *For when they shall say, Peace and Safety, then sudden Destruction cometh upon them as Travail upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape.* And thus God has declared by the Prophet, that *there is no Peace to the wicked*³; that is, to those who continue in an impenitent course, and when they come to die flatter themselves with a vain Assurance of Peace, when no Peace belongs unto them.

¹ Mat. 3. 8. & 7. 21. Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24.
² 1 Thess. 5. 3. ³ Is. 48. 22.

CHAP. VII.

Of Repentance.

THE other Vertue comprehending the whole Duty Repent-
of a Christian is REPENTANCE. But *ance.*
before we discourse particularly of its Nature, it will
not be amiss to premise some things concerning the
various Acceptations of it, and the several Names by
which it is called in Scripture.

Repentance in Scripture is taken in a threefold *Its several*
Sense. (1.) In a general and wide Sense, compre- *Accepta-*
hending that whole change of Life, whereby a Sin- *tions in*
ner is converted from a State of Sin to Righteousness; *Scripture.*
and forsaking the old, enters upon a new course of Life
in Faith and Obedience to the Divine Commands.
(2.) In strict a Sense, to denote that special Change, by
which a Man upon notice of any one Sin committed
by him after his general Conversion, recollects himself
and amends his Error.¹ (3.) In a most strict Sense,
to signify the Act of a Sinner, whereby having a
just Sense of his Sins, and a dread of the Punishment
due to them, he is so far chang'd, as to be weary of
his State, grieve for his Sins, long for a Deliverance,
and to resolve upon a new and better course of Life.²
'Tis in the first Sense, as taking in the whole Duty of
a Christian, we shall explain *Repentance*, wherein all
the Acts of it mention'd in the third Signification are
included.

This Duty is in Scripture express'd under various, *The Names*
and sometimes *Metaphorical* Names; being called *by which*
called.

¹ Thus 'tis taken Luk. 24. 47. Acts 3. 19. & 5. 31. & 26.
20. ² Thus 'tis taken Rev. 2. 5. & 3. 3—19. ³ In this
Sense the Repentance preached by John the Baptist and our Savi-
our seems to be taken, Mat. 3. 2. & 4. 17.

*Conversion**, *Renovation**, a new Creature*, *Regeneration**, an *eschewing of Evil and doing of Good**. But these various Phrases do not denote a different, but represent to us one and the same thing in a different manner, according to its various Circumstances: For they all agree in this, that a Man must forsake his old, and enter upon a new course of Life. The two Words by which Repentance is in the Original most commonly represented to us, are *Μετάνοια* and *Μεταμέλεια*, the one (according to some Interpreters) denoting the *Outward*, the former the *Inward* and actual change of the Mind. However it would be easy to evince, both from Scripture, and the Usage of them in the Writings of the Primitive Fathers, that these two Words are equivalent, and promiscuously us'd one for another. But passing by such Criticisms about the Name, we shall in the following Sections explain *Repentance* it self, as to its *Nature*, *Subject*, *Causes*, *Effects*, and *Contraries*.

S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of Repentance.

*Repentance de-
fin'd.*

REPENTANCE is that Sorrow of Mind which arises from a Sense of Sins committed, and of a vicious Habit contracted by customary sinning, as also from a Conviction of Guilt and Fear of Punishment; and which produces a Desire of Deliverance, a serious Endeavour after a better change of Life, and an Obedience to all the Divine Commands. From this Definition 'tis plain, that Repentance properly so called is preceded by a Habit of Sin, and a Mind, if not altogether, yet in some measure, averse to Vertue, and enslaved to Vice. Therefore every Sorrow for Sin is not properly Repentance, but that which is occasioned after some continuance in Sin.

* Acts 14. 15. & 26. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 16. * Rom. 12. 2.
Eph. 4. 23. Tit. 3. 4, 5. 3 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15.
* Joh. 3. 5. Tit. 3. 5. * 1 Pet. 3. 11.

But

But for a more distinct Apprehension of the *Nature* of *Repentance*, 'tis fit to explain, first, the *Cause* which raises this Sorrow in the Mind; secondly, the *Sorrow* it self; and thirdly, the *Effects* of such a Sorrow.

The *Cause* of *Sorrow*, and consequently the first step *Conviction* to *Repentance*, is a due Conviction and Sense of our *Misery*, for the attaining of which these three things *of our Misery, the* are requir'd: (1.) A Knowledge of the Divine Law, *first Step* the Rule of what is just and vertuous, promising Rewards and denouncing Punishments according to the revealed Will of God. (2.) The examining of Conscience by the Assistance of Memory concerning what is past, whereby a Man calls to mind his former Actions, and applying them to the Rule of the Divine Law, comes to know what he has committed that is forbidden, and what he has omitted that is commanded by that Law, and how far on that account he is guilty in the sight of God. (3.) An Experience of our Infirmary, arising from the Habit of Sin, and the difficulty of a contrary Practice, which receives no small Addition from the Resistance our Lusts make to the Divine Prohibition; for God knows we are all too prone to what is forbidden us. This seems to be the Apostle's meaning when he says, 'I had not known Lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet; i. e. I had not been sensible that Concupiscence was so prevalent in me, had not the Law forbidden the Fact.

After such a *Conviction* comes *Sorrow*, which properly constitutes that Act of *Repentance*, which the *Rossin*, from *manists* call *Contrition*. This Sorrow proceeds from *whence it* several things: (1.) From the consideration of the *rijses*. Act, or rather Acts committed or omitted against God's Laws, with a serious Dislike of them. (2.) From a fear of Punishment due for the Sin, and which cannot be avoided without amendment of Life. (3.) (to render it compleat) From a due sense and consideration of having offended a most Gracious, Powerful and Just God, by which Offence a distance is placed betwixt him and us, and no Salvation is to be attained by us so long as that lasts. Such a Considera-

Rom. 7. 7.

tion

tion worketh a *Godly Sorrow unto Repentance not to be repented of*, and is such an one as is properly *Filial*, being displeased with our selves for offending so good and kind a Father. Now tho such a Sorrow may, nay (if it be serious) cannot forbear to express it self by outward Signs, such as Tears, Sighs, Groans, &c. yet these external Signs are not essential or necessary to that Sorrow, which is chiefly an Act and Affection of the Mind, grieving inwardly for its Sins, and returning to its Duty by the full Change and Renovation of its Will.

Its Effects
Confession,
and a sted-
fast Reso-
lution of
Amend-
ment.

The *Effects* of such a Sorrow, are (1.) *Confession*: not such an *Auricular* one as the *Romanists* contend for, which is made to their Priests, in order to obtain Absolution; but that whereby the Sinner with Sighs and Tears, or other Expressions of Sorrow, lays open his Heart, and confesses his Sins before God, without which *Confession* 'tis in vain for any one to expect the Remission of them. (2.) *A serious and stedfast Resolution of Amendment of Life*, for in such a Resolution Repentance properly consists. This gives the Mind a thorow Change, and by it is Sin subdued and weakened. A true Sign of such a Resolution is, when a Man upon the first Opportunity that offers really puts it into Execution, and amends his Life; for a bare Intention, an idle and unactive Resolution is no part of Repentance, and that for these plain Reasons: First, it is not to be ascribed to our Labour or Industry, but to some external Helps to Virtue, such as Education, good Examples, &c. which do beget in the Minds of Men some love of Virtue, which is not wholly extinguished unless in those that are desperately wicked. Secondly, it does by no means make us the better, for such empty Wishes may be made, and yet the Man be never the more alter'd, since they do not determine him to the pursuit of Virtue, and the surmounting of all Difficulties for the sake of it.

1 2 Cor. 7. 10.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

Of the Subject of Repentance.

The *whole Man*, with all his Faculties both of Soul ^{Its Subject,} and Body, the Understanding, Will, Affections, and ^{the whole} Members, is the *Subject* of Repentance. With respect ^{Man.} to the *Understanding*, as it was before deprived of the saving Knowledge of the Divine Law, and groped as it were in the dark; so now 'tis enlightned with the Knowledge of the Divine Will, has a certain Rule of Life, according to which it can and ought to pass a Judgment upon its Actions. As to the *Will*, it is so far regulated as to follow the Dictates of an illuminated Understanding, desiring what it thinks fit to be desired, and hating what it judges proper to be hated. The *Affections* are the Servants and Followers of the Will, and excite the Man to the pursuit of Virtue. Lastly, the *External Actions* are the Attendants on the Affections, conformable to the Divine Law, and consequently agreeable to the Motions of a sanctified Will. By this means there is not a *partial*, but a Change of the *whole Man* effected; and he who before took a pleasure in Sin, does now hate it, and delights in Virtue.

From hence 'tis easy to determine, what we ought ^{No part} to think of the Opinion of the *Contra-Remonstrants*, ^{remains} concerning the Imperfection of Regeneration in this ^{unregene-} Life: For they maintain that the whole Man and ^{rate in the} all his Faculties are not the Subject of Regeneration, ^{Regene-} but that there is in Man an innate Concupiscence, ^{rate.} which after the acquired Habits of Sin are destroyed, remains, and always in the regenerate struggles against the Spirit, and often withdraws a Man from the Love of God, so that he frequently falls into Sin; but that in the other World it will be wholly extinguished: so that our Regeneration is only initial in this Life. As for our parts, we freely acknowledge that there are several Degrees of the Faithful and Regenerate, since the Habit of Sin is not and cannot be shaken off all at once. But that there is in a Regenerate

rate Man a natural Corruption, and the Remains of an innate Concupiscence, which God will not remove in this Life, and by which a Regenerated Man may sometimes be induced to Sin, is repugnant both to Reason and Scripture.

*This prov'd
by several
Argu-
ments.*

For (1.) The *Scripture* always describes to us the Regeneration of the whole Man, as renewed in his Understanding, Will, Affections and Actions.. (2.) Whereas they maintain that the Unregenerate part cannot but sin, and God will not remove it, the Consequence will be, that God is the Cause of all the Sins which remain in the Regenerate; since by the denial of his Divine Act, they are necessarily drawn into Sin. (3.) This their Opinion supposes two contrary compleat Wills in one and the same Man; upon the account of the Unregenerate part, a compleat Will of sinning, and with respect to the Regenerate part, a compleat Will not to consent to the Sin; which is absurd. (4.) It supposes that the compleat Will of the Regenerate part should sometimes submit to the Will of the Unregenerate part, which is likewise absurd, and repugnant to the Nature of Regeneration, wherein the Spirit is master over the Flesh. (5.) And lastly, which is worst of all, this Opinion is destructive of true Piety; since it maintains that grievous Sins, and often repeated, are consistent with true Regeneration; that 'tis necessary for a regenerated Man to fall sometimes into Sins, provided his Reason makes some struggle with the Concupiscence. Now what an Inlet to Vice, what an Encouragement to Slothfulness in subduing and avoiding it, is here?

*Objections
answered.*

However they produce some Texts of Scripture, and some Arguments in defence of this their Opinion, which it will be proper to take into examination, and refute.

*Rom. 7.
explain'd.*

In the first place they urge several Passages in the seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, where the Apostle, who was regenerated and in God's favour, says of himself that he was *Carnal, sold under Sin, did the Evil that he would not, that Sin dwelt in him and in his Flesh*, whereby he was at it were *Captive to the Law of Sin*. Answ. The Apostle does

not

not here speak of himself, nor does he describe the State of a regenerate Man; but under his own Person (as was usual for him in other Places¹, to avoid Pride or Envy, to personate others) he represents to us the State of an unregenerate Man, viz. of a Jew, as before and under the Law. This is evident from the main Drift of the Chapter, and from the Description of the Person deliver'd in it; which last is far from being the Character of one who is regenerated, such an one being described in quite contrary Terms in Scripture². Besides, the things mention'd in this Chapter are contrary to the Character which St. Paul gives of himself in other Places, wherein he does not describe himself as *Carnal, sold under Sin, &c.* but as one *walking worthy of the Gospel, and able to do all things*. Thus he expresses himself, *Be ye Followers of me, as I am of Christ*³: And again, *Brethren, be Followers of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an Example*⁴: And again, *I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me*⁵. Now what a different Character is this from what some Men would fasten on that great Apostle, who pretend that in the seventh Chapter of the *Romans*, he speaks of himself even whilst he was in a regenerate State?

But still they urge several Passages out of this Chapter, as first that the Person herein described is said *to will that which is good*, which the Unregenerate will not. *Ans.* The Will of doing good attributed to this Person here described is an uncompleat Will, and barely a *Velleity*, since it does not the good which it wills. And that this Velleity or Willingness is in the Unregenerate, is plain from hence, that since Sin is repugnant to the Divine Law, and the Dictates of Natural Conscience, they would avoid it and do good: but they are born down to the contrary by a vicious Habit and the Sweetness of Sin, so that the Flesh

¹ Rom. 3. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 12. & 10. 23. & 13. 1, 2. Gal. 2. 10. ² Gal. 5. 24. Rom. 8. 12, 13. Rom. 6. 17, 18. Joh. 8. 34, 35, 36. Phil. 2. 12, 13. Rom. 6. 4, 5, 6. *Ib.* v. 11, 12. *Ch.* 8. v. 2. Gal. 2. 20. & 5. 24. Eph. 2. 10, &c. ³ 1 Cor. 11. 1. ⁴ Phil. 3. 17. ⁵ Phil. 4. 13.

bears a sway over the Spirit. This was the Case of *Medea*, of whom *Ovid* says,

*Sed trahit invitum nova Vis, aliudque Cupido;
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora sequor*——

Now certainly the Character given of such a wretched wicked Woman can never in any tolerable sense be apply'd to *St. Paul*, or to any other regenerated Person, who can do all things through Christ that strengthens him. Secondly, 'tis urg'd, that the Person here described is said to consent to, and delight in the Law of God. *Answ.* (1.) To consent to the Law of God, is to acknowledg it to be Holy, Just, and Good; which the Unregenerate may do as well as the Regenerate, else they would not be guilty of a Sin against Conscience. (2.) To delight in the Law is the same with consenting to it, by a *Metonymy* of the Consequent for the Antecedent. But (3.) even delighting in the Law of God is no sufficient Argument of Regeneration, since *Herod* heard *John* gladly¹, and the *Jews* rejoic'd in his Light²; and they who endure for a time hear the Word, and immediately receive it with Joy³; yet none of these can be said to be regenerated. Thirdly, they say, that in this Chapter mention is made of an *Inward* and an *Outward* Man. *Answ.* True; but not of a *New* and an *Old* Man, which are inconsistent in one and the same Subject. Now there is a great deal of difference between these two Appellations. For (1.) the *Old* and *New* Man denote the Qualifications of the Subject, the one signifying his old Course of Life before Conversion, the other his new one after it. Whereas (2.) the *Inward* and *Outward* Man are only Parts of the whole, the former denoting only the Mind, the other the Body or Habitation of the Soul, both of them the constituent Parts of Man. Fourthly, 'tis said, that the Apostle bewails his Misery, and earnestly desires to be freed from it. *Answ.* *St. Paul* here only intimates what sort of Pray-

¹ Mar. 6. 20. ² Joh. 5. 35. ³ Mat. 13. 20.

Chap. 7. Body of Divinity.

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er is suitable to such a State, and declares the Mercy of God through *Jefus Christ* to be the only means of attaining a Deliverance from it. Now this Prayer still argues that the Person who makes it is Unregenerate; for how can one who is Regenerate and freed from the Death of Sin, pray to be deliver'd from the Body or Power of that Death?

Another Place produced by the Men of the same side Gal. 5. 17. is Gal. 5. 17. *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* *Explained.*

Answ. (1.) The Apostle does not here say that the Flesh does always resist the Spirit in the Regenerate by an actual Lusting, for the contrary to this appears from ver. 24. where *they that are Christ's* are said to *have crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lufts.* But his meaning is, that the Nature of the Flesh is such, that when it lusteth, it lusteth against the Spirit; and therefore he admonishes the *Galatians* to walk no longer in the Lufts of the Flesh, wherein they had walked before their Conversion, since they are contrary to the Spirit. But (2.) supposing that this Struggling should in the beginning of Regeneration last for some time, by reason of an inveterate Custom of sinning which cannot be subdued all on a sudden; yet at last it ceases in the grown up Christians, who are stiled perfect upon the account of their having got the mastery over the Flesh: and hence it is that such are said to *love God with all their Heart, and with all their Soul, and with all their Strength.*

Lastly, they thus argue: There are some Remains of What sort Concupiscence in a Man after Regeneration: But this of Concupif- is a Sin; for so the Apostle says, Rom. 7. 7. *I had not known Lust, had not the Law said, Thou shalt not covet.* *cence re-*

Answ. In a regenerate Man there is not such a remain- *mains in* der of Concupiscence, as always actually covets Evil; but *the Rege-* there is a certain natural Power or Faculty in our Flesh *nerate.* whereby a Man apprehends what is grateful or ungrateful to him, and without which he cannot tell what to desire, or what to avoid: But that this is no Sin, nor the Remainder of Original Sin, I have elsewhere proved.

* Ch. 3. §. 2. of this Book.

Whereas that Concupiscence, which is properly a Sin, either arises from a vicious Habit, and so is not equal in all Men; or else is a settled and confirm'd Concupiscence, wherein the carnal Man takes a pleasure: but neither of these is in the Regenerate.

Rom. 7.7.
explained.

As for the Text they produce, the same Lust is there understood, which is forbidden by the Tenth Commandment. Now in that Commandment are not prohibited the first Motions of Concupiscence, which are immediately stifled; but only such a Lusting, whereby a Man covets to enjoy his Neighbour's Goods against his Will: as was the Case of *Ahab* who coveted *Naboth's* Vineyard, and of those who under the Law coveted their Neighbour's Wife, and in order to make her their own, fomented the Differences between her and her Husband, and carried them so high, that at last it came to a Separation.

After all, we freely acknowledg that we are born with a Constitution less pure, and consequently our Inclinations to things grateful to the Flesh are stronger, than they were in our first Parents. Hence it is that we are sooner incited to inordinate Motions and Affections, being born of Parents accustomed to Sin, from whom we have derived a more than ordinary Corruption. However this is rather a *Physical* or *Natural*, than a *Moral* Corruption; and is so far from being truly and properly a Sin, that the first Motions arising from thence are a subject Matter of exercising our Vertue.

Having thus largely refuted this their Opinion, all that is founded upon it falls likewise to the ground, as might be made evident from all the several Conclusions they deduce from it; but since we have already in part answered all that can be objected on that side, we shall pass by those Particulars which are hardly worth mentioning.

S E C T. II.

Of the Causes, and Effects of, and the Opposites to Repentance.

1. The *Primary Cause* of Repentance is God, to whom our Regeneration is frequently attributed in Scripture¹. And this likewise appears from all those Places wherein he is stiled the Author and Cause of all the Good we enjoy, and consequently of our whole Salvation.

The *Means* God makes use of in working Repentance in us is his *Word*, which is always attended with the Efficacy of the Holy Ghost; and contains in it several strong Motives to Repentance: as (1.) The Wrath of God against Sinners, especially such as are obstinate and impenitent². (2.) Examples of severe Judgments exercis'd towards impenitent and incorrigible Sinners: Such as the Universal Deluge, the Destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the utter Dispersion of the *Jews*. (3.) Divine Blessings to invite Sinners to Repentance³. (4.) Promises of Grace and Pardon made to the Penitent⁴. (5.) Instances of the Divine Grace made to penitent Sinners, who had fallen into grievous Offences, such as *David*⁵, *Manasses*⁶, the *Ninivites*⁷, and *Peter*⁸.

From what has been said it is evident, that God works not Repentance in Man by an irresistible Power, but that Man's voluntary Obedience must concur for the producing of it. For in none of the foregoing Arguments is there any irresistible Force, but they require a tractable, not a refractory Mind; else it would prove ineffectual.

¹ Ezek. 11. 19, 20. & 36. 26, 27. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Acts 5. 31. & 11. 18. ² Mat. 11. 20, 21. Luk. 13. 3, 5. Rom. 2. 4, 5. Mat. 23. 37, 38. ³ Rom. 2. 4. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. ⁴ 11. 1. 16, 17, 18. & 18. 27. Luk. 24. 47. ⁵ 2 Sam. 12. ⁶ 2 Chron. 33. 11, 12, 13. ⁷ Jonah 3. 10. ⁸ John 21. 15.

Its Consequence, Remission of Sins ;

2. The Effect or rather Consequent of Repentance, is Remission of Sins and Eternal Life ; which two have so close a Connexion with one another, that they cannot be separated ; for to whom God remits Sins, on him will he bestow Eternal Life upon his Perseverance. By Repentance therefore a Man is restored to the same State wherein he was before he sinned ; and his Sins are reckoned by God as if never committed : And therefore when he forgives Sins, he is said to blot out our Transgressions¹, to cast them behind his back², and to remember them no more³.

And not the Sense of Remission only.

This we thought fit to observe, in opposition to those who maintain that Remission of Sins is not obtained by Repentance (that being acquir'd by Faith, which is none of our Act) but only the Sense of Remission. Now what an absurd Opinion is this, how directly contrary to the Holy Scriptures ? For if by Repentance, as by a Sign of Remission already obtain'd, we only acquire a Sense of it ; then it follows, that we had obtain'd Remission and were in God's favour before we repented, *i. e.* whilst we were yet Sinners. Now what can be more repugnant to Scripture than this ? Since there we are taught, That our Sins separate between us and our God, and make him hide his Face from us, that he will not hear⁴ ; nay, that we can have no Fellowship with him, unless we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light⁵. Nay, what can be more destructive of the Necessity of Repentance than this Opinion ? For according to it, Repentance is not requisite for the obtaining Remission of Sins, but only a Sense thereof ; whereas Remission alone, without a Sense of it, is available to Salvation. A Man therefore (according to them) may even whilst he is a Slave of Sin, obtain Remission, and consequently Salvation, a Notion manifestly repugnant to several plain Texts of Scripture⁶.

Rom. 4. 5. But 'tis objected, that the Apostle speaks of God justifying the Ungodly, Rom. 4. 5. Answ. St. Paul explained.

¹ Psal. 51. 3, 11. Is. 43. 25. Dan. 9. 24. ² Is. 38. 17.
³ Ezek. 18. 22. ⁴ Is. 59. 2. Eph. 5. 5, 6. ⁵ 1 John 1. 6, 7. ⁶ Mat. 5. 20. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

does not here mean an ungodly Man still persevering in his Wickedness, but one already converted to God by a serious Repentance.

Again they cry that our Saviour, *Luk. 7. 47.* says of *Luk. 7. 47.* the Woman that was a Sinner, that *her Sins which are explained.*

many are forgiven, for she loved much: But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Answ, Our Lord here speaks of that Love, which not only follows Remission, but likewise the Sense of it: since the Cause of its being greater or less, proceeds from the Remission of more or fewer Sins. Now such a Remission does not produce a greater Love, but only so far as it is perceived by the Mind, which is eas'd from so heavy a Burden of its Sins. As therefore they will not from hence infer, that there is no Love previous to the Sense of Remission; so they might easily conceive, that hereby is not excluded such a Love as precedes Remission it self: unless they could evidently prove from other places of Scripture, that Remission is previous to all and every kind of Love we are capable of, which we are pretty certain they can never do.

However *Remission* is not, properly speaking, the Effect of *Repentance*, nor is it produc'd by any Force or Merit thereof. *Repentance* is only the Condition requir'd by God for the obtaining of Pardon, which is his own gratuitous Act, whereby he recedes from his Right, and does not insist upon the Punishments which Men deserve. So that all Merit on Man's part is excluded, Remission of Sins being owing wholly to the Grace of God.

The *Opposites* or *Contraries* to *Repentance*, are either *Opposites* such as is *Hypocritical*, or downright *Impenitence*. to *Repentance*. An *Hypocritical Repentance* is, when a Man pretends, to be touch'd with a Sorrow for the Commission of ^{1. An Hy-} Sins, and to be willing to amend his Life, when ^{pocritical} he really does neither the one, nor the other. And ^{one.} of such a nature was the Repentance of *Pharaoh*¹, and of *Simon Magus*². But besides this, there is another kind of *Hypocritical Repentance*, viz. such whereby a Man, without a true Amendment

¹ Exod. 8. 9, 10. ² Acts 8. 24.

of his Faults, thinks by the performance of some external Acts not requir'd by God, nor working any Change in the Heart, that he has acted the *true Penitent*. Of this kind are all those among the *Romanists*, who think they have sufficiently aton'd for their Sins, and truly repented of them, if they have but perform'd some outward Acts of Penance enjoin'd them by their Priests. In this sense it is that all those who content themselves only with the mere *outside* of Piety, tho upon that account they suppose themselves in the Divine Favour, yet are call'd *HYPOCRITES*, because they only *honour God with their Lips, whilst their Heart is far from him* ¹.

2. *Impenitence.*

Impenitence is, when a Man does not grieve for the Sins he has committed, nor propose to amend his Life. This is either *Temporary*, when one for a time perseveres in his Sins without any concern or dread of the Divine Wrath, but at last rousing as it were out of the Lethargy of Sin, turns himself to God with his whole Heart; of which *Manasseh* King of *Judah* was an eminent Instance ²: Or else it is *Final*, wherein a Man perseveres to his Life's End; which, since no Amendment of Life succeeds, is immediately followed by Eternal Punishment and Condemnation.

Its Causes. There are several Causes of *Impenitence*, as (1.) *Atheism* or *Epicureism*; for how can he, who believes not that there is a God who takes care of Human Affairs, grieve for his Sins as provoking the Anger of a Deity, or forsake them to recover his Favour? (2.) A fond Opinion of the infinite Mercy of God, as if it could never be exhausted, or as if it were contrary to his Nature to punish Sin. Whereas God is as *just* as he is *merciful*, and is a severe Revenger of Sins, without any violation of his Mercy. (3.) An Abuse of the Examples of some, who in Scripture are said to have obtain'd Pardon from God for the most enormous Offences, such as *David*, *Peter*, &c. from whence these impenitent Persons infer, that 'tis easy for them also to obtain Remission of Sins. But certainly those Men are mistaken, since they imitate the others

¹ Mat. 15. 7, 8. ² 2 Ch. on. 33. 9, &c.

in their Offences, but never follow the Example of their serious Repentance. Let such remember then to repent, as *David, Peter, &c.* did, since without so doing they can have no hopes of a Pardon from God. (4.) A Hope of Impunity is another Cause of Impenitence, for this takes off the Force of the Divine Threatnings, and makes Men feed themselves up with a Fancy that they shall not be punished, contrary to the exprefs Declaration of God. (5.) A Despair of Pardon, which is such a dreadful Punishment as cannot be evaded by any Repentance; since it puts the Sinner out of all Hopes, and consequently makes him desperate, and remits in his Endeavours after true Repentance. (6.) And lastly, the inveterate Custom of Sin is another Cause of Impenitence, since it becomes a second Nature, and renders Sin insuperable. Hence it is that God by the Prophet says, *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed or taught to do Evil.*

The *Effects* of *Impenitence* are Punishments of all kinds: *Temporal*, inflicted sometimes in this Life, and of which we have a large account in Scripture¹: and *Spiritual* in this World, such as Blindness, Hardness of Heart, delivering over to a Reprobate Sense to believe a Lye²; or in the next, such as Eternal Condemnation and Death, and being cast into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels³.

CHAP. VIII.

Of our Duty towards God, comprehended under the Word GODLINESS.

THE several distinct Duties of a Christian are *The three* branched out into three Parts; such as relate to *General* God, our Neighbour, or our Selves, comprehended *Duties of a* *Christian.*

¹ Jer. 13. 23. ² Lev. 26. Deut. 28. Ezek. 14. 21. ³ Rom. 1. 26, &c. Eph. 4. 18, 19. 2 Thess. 2. 9, &c. ⁴ Joh. 3. 36. Rom. 2. 4, 5.

under that Summary of the Christian Religion, *Godliness, Righteousness, and Sobriety*; stiled by the Apostle, *Living soberly, righteously, and godily in this present World*. According to this Distinction, we shall treat of the whole Duty of a Christian in several distinct Chapters.

*Piety
what.*

In this we shall begin with the Duty we owe to God, as comprehended under the word *Godliness*; which we define thus, *That it is a Vertue, or rather Duty, which pays a due and suitable Worship to God*. To this there are two things requisite; First, that such an Honour or Worship be paid to the Divine Being, as is answerable to the Greatness of his Majesty and Sovereignty over all, with the rest of his Attributes: And secondly, that it be paid to him alone. This will lead us to consider the Object of Divine Worship, and the several Parts of it; of which we will treat particularly in this and the four following Chapters.

S E C T. I.

Of the Object of Piety or Godliness.

*The Object
of Piety,
God.*

Above all things, it is requisite to know, Who this God is that ought to be worshipped. Now God has so clearly manifested himself in his Word by the several Works of *Creation, Preservation, and Providence*, and other miraculous Operations, that whoever believes the Divinity of the Scripture, must needs be sensible who the God is that ought to be worshipped. But for the clearer Manifestation of his Essence, he was always willing to describe himself by some extraordinary and fresh Blessing, in distinction from those who were falsely stil'd Gods. Thus in the old World, when the Work of *Creation* was fresh in Mens Memory, he was call'd *the Creator of Heaven and Earth*; afterwards upon the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Posterity, he is term'd *the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*; when the Children of *Israel* were deliver'd from the *Egyptian Captivity*, he says of himself, *I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage*: And

Chap. 8. *Body of Divinity.*

And lastly, under the Gospel Dispensation and the New Covenant made with Man, he is usually stiled *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. He it is, under these several Denominations, who is the Object of our religious Worship; which is required by the Terms of the first Commandment, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but ME*.

Since we have already explained the Divine Nature and Attributes, it may here be enquir'd, whether one who is under some Error about the Divine Essence ought to be accounted as a Person that owns or worships another God. Some there are who charge such Men with that Crime, since representing God to themselves quite otherwise than he is, they form to themselves another God. This is some Mens Opinion; but far be it from us to say any such thing. In this World we see but through a Glass darkly, and consequently cannot have a perfect and adequate Notion of the Divine Essence; therefore there must be in all Men an imperfect Knowledge of God, which may very easily be tainted with some Error. 'Tis enough if we ascribe the Divine Essence to that Deity alone, which has so clearly manifested himself by his illustrious Works; and if we believe all those things of God, which the Scripture prescribes as necessary to be believed of him, and of which, in order to pay the Worship due to him, we ought not to be ignorant.

But it may be farther ask'd, since God has under the New Covenant reveal'd his Essence to us as communicated to the Son and Holy Ghost, whether therefore the *Jews* and others, who suppose that this Essence belongs only to the One true God, whom we stile the FATHER, are not to be reckon'd as Persons who own *Another God*? Answ. Some Divines do indeed charge the *Jews* with such a Crime, particularly *Nicolas Videlins* *. As for our parts, since they own no other God, besides the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who brought their Forefathers out of the Land of *Egypt*, we cannot, we dare not say, that they worship a fictitious Deity: For they acknowledg the same Di-

* See the Passage at large in his Treatise de Deo Synagogæ, p. 137.

vine Essence with us Christians, and are only ignorant of its Communication to the three Persons of the Blessed Trinitity.

Who are the Transgressors of this Precept.

The Rise of Idolatry.

They are therefore the peculiar and proper Transgressors of that Command, who either deny God and his Providence, or form to themselves any other God, besides him who brought the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*. For the Design of this Precept was to forbid the worshipping of false Gods, which then prevail'd in the Heathen World. Many of the *Gentiles* had formed supposititious Deities to themselves; and so *Idolatry* crept in by degrees among them, and arriv'd to a high pitch. They first worshipp'd the Sun and Moon, with all the Host of Heaven, upon the account of the favourable Influences they either had received, or expected to receive from them. Next they fell to idolize their Princes and other Great Persons, that had done Them or their Countries any signal Service; and these they likewise placed among the Stars, called them first *Heroes*, and then made them *Gods*. Now they are stiled *Other Gods*, not because they are real Divinities, but because the *Gentiles* ascribed, tho' falsely, the Divine Essence to them.

Now to have *Another God*, implies these three things; (1.) To conceive or esteem in our Minds any thing beside the only true God to be Divine, or to pay a Reverence to it in our Judgments as to a Deity, for by this means it is believed to be a God. (2.) To worship it with any Religious Affection, such as Love, Fear, Trust, Hope, &c. (3.) To express such a Judgment or Affection by any external Act, such as that of Honour, Worship, Adoration, Invocation, Sacrifices, Erecting of Temples and Altars to them, with the like.

Whereas by such Acts the Divine Benefits are disown'd, and falsely ascribed to others, without taking notice of the true Author of them; hence it is, that God severely prohibits this Sin, and will not permit his Glory to be given to another'.

S E C T. II.

Of the Worship due to Jesus Christ as Mediator.

Altho we have excluded all Creatures from being *Worship* the Object of *Divine Worship*, yet this is not to be *due to* extended to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the *Mediator* be- *Christ of* twixt God and Man, crowned with Glory and Honour, *two kinds.* and exalted at the right Hand of the Father. For notwithstanding as MAN, he is also a Creature; yet upon the account of his Exaltation and Mediatorial Office, he is so far advanc'd above all other Creatures, that Religious Honour ought to be paid him by all Men, as to their Lord. Now the *Worship* due to *Jesus Christ*, may be consider'd either as he is the Son of God, Partaker of the same Nature with God, and this is the same *Worship* which is paid to God himself: Or else as he is the *Mediator*, and in this Sense it is we shall at present consider it.

The *Worship* then to be paid to Christ as our *Media-* What sort *tor*, tho it be not of the highest kind, but is subordinate of *Worship* to that of the Father, and tends to his Glory, yet con- *due to him* sists of the same Religious Acts that are perform'd to *as Media-* God himself; which are in Scripture reckon'd to be *for.* these, *Adoration, Invocation, putting our trust in, and giving thanks to him.* All these we shall shew more largely hereafter to be Acts of Piety, and shall at present briefly prove that they are to be paid to *Christ as Mediator.*

In the first place, that Christ as such is to be ho- *1. He is to* noured and adored, appears from several Texts of *be adored.* Scripture; but especially from *Philip. 2. 8, 9, 10, 11.* wherein are contained the following Particulars: (1.) That the Lord *Jesus* is to be ador'd, since at his Name every Knee must bow, and every Tongue confess that he is the Lord. (2.) That he is to be ador'd as *Mediator*, since the Foundation thereof is his Exaltation at the right Hand of the Father for the sake of

1. Joh. 5. 22, 23, 27. Heb. 1. 6,

his suffering the ignominious Death of the Cross (3.) That this whole Adoration is subordinate to the Adoration of the Father, and terminates in him, as is plain from these Words, *To the Glory of God the Father.*

2. To be
called upon
and trusted
in.

Secondly, That *Jesus* as *Mediator* is to be called upon and trusted in, is evident, (1.) From the Promise he made of answering the Requests of those who call upon him'. (2.) Because he is our High Priest, to whose Throne of Grace we are to fly, *to obtain Mercy and find Grace to help us in time of need*. (3.) The same is proved from the Examples of the Apostles and other holy Men, who in their distress poured out their Prayers and Supplications to the Lord *Jesus*. Thus St. Stephen, when stoned to Death cries out, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*; and St. Paul when buffeted by the Messenger of Satan, prayed *ὦ Κύριον, the Lord thrice, that he might depart from him*': And St. John, *Even so, Come Lord Jesus*. (4.) To this may be added the Apostles Invocation and Prayers at the beginning and ending of their Epistles, wherein they pray God the Father and our Lord *Jesus Christ*, to bestow Peace and Grace on the Believers.

3. Thank-
giving due
to him.

In the third place, that Thanks is to be given to *Jesus* as *Mediator*, is manifest from *Rev.* 5. 8, 9. where the four Beasts and four and twenty Elders are said to have sung a new Song, saying, *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeem'd us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred and Tongue, &c.* And ver. 1. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour and Glory, and Blessing.* And immediately after, ver. 1. *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* Nay, the very Celebration of the holy Eucharist, is nothing else but a solemn Act of Thanksgiving, wherein we commemorate the Death

' Joh. 14. 13, 14. ' Heb. 4. 14, 15, 16. ' Acts 7. 55, 56.
60. ' 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9. ' Rev. 22. 20.

of Christ, and the Benefits we receive thereby.
 To these things may be added, that in our *Jesus* *All the At-*
 are all those Attributes, requisite for the exciting such *tributes in*
 a Religious Worship; so that we may not only adore, *Christ re-*
 but also with Assurance call upon him. For (1.) He *quir'd for*
 has a *Sovereign Dominion* over all things, both in *such a Wor-*
 Heaven and Earth, being Lord over all, and there *ship.*
 is nothing but what is subject to him. (2.) *Omni-*
science, whereby he knows all our Necessities, hears
 all our Prayers wherever they are made, and can
 tell with what Intention we make them. Such a
 Knowledg was attributed to him whilst on Earth;
 much more is it to be ascribed to him since his Ex-
 altation into Heaven, himself assuring us of it.
 (3.) He is endued with *Power*, whereby he is able to
 succour us in all our Distresses, how great and how
 many so ever, to free us from all our Miseries, and to
 heap upon us all manner of Blessings. (4.) He
 bears an *Affectionate Love* towards us, by which
 he is willing to exert his Power and Authority for
 our good, can tell how to help our Infirmities,
 since he died for us, was tempted in all things as
 we are, that *he might become a merciful and faithful*
High-Priest; and being tempted himself, he is able also
to succour them that are tempted.

This Doctrine, we are sensible, will not please all *Objections*
 sorts of People: For some there are who allow that *raised by*
 Christ the *Mediator* is to be called upon, but then *two sorts*
 not as *Mediator*, but as he is *GOD*. Others deny *of Men,*
 that Christ ought to be called upon at all; nay, some *answered.*
 of these will not admit him to be adored, since they
 acknowledg him not as a *King* that reigns actually in
 Heaven. We will enquire into, and refute the prin-
 cipal *Objections* brought by them to what we have
 said.

First then, they object the Command extant *Deut. 6.*
Deut. 6. 13. and urg'd by our Saviour to the 13. &
Mar. 4. 10.
explained.

* Mat. 28. 18. Joh. 17. 2. Heb. 1. 3, 4. & 2. 7, 8.
 Eph. 1. 20, 21, &c. 1 Pet. 3. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 27. * Joh. 2.
 5. & 21. 17. * Rev. Ch. 1. 2, 3. * Phil. 3. 21. * Heb. 2.
 7, 18. & 4. 15, 16. & 10. 22, 23.

Devil,

Devil, who tempted him to fall down and worship him; Mat. 4. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Answ. (1.) God alone is to be ador'd, since he himself in his own Nature is worthy of such an Honour, and 'tis not lawful to apply this Adoration to any other without his express Command. But it does not from hence follow, that God cannot communicate this Honour to his Son, sent by him into the World as *Mediator*, upon the account of his Office; especially since it is an inferiour sort of Honour, which tends to the Glory of God himself. (2.) Here is meant that Person, whom Christ himself was bound to worship, who could be none else but God the Father, besides whom Christ, as *Mediator*, own'd no other Superior to himself. But 'tis very weak to conclude from thence, that God could not graciously communicate this Honour to *Jesum*. Even a King in his own Territories ought only to be honoured with a civil Worship or Respect, and yet we find *Pharaoh* communicated this Honour to *Joseph*, without the least eclipsing of his own. Now whereas *Joseph*, next to the King in Dignity, could not pay a Civil Adoration to any in *Egypt* besides *Pharaoh*, it can from thence by no means be infer'd, that it was unlawful for all the *Egyptians* to pay *Joseph* that Reverence and Respect which *Pharaoh* had commanded them to pay.

Isa. 42. 8. Secondly, They object that God says, *Isa. 42. 8. I am explained. the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another.* Answ. God speaks this in exclusion of the *Gentile Idols*, for there 'tis added, *neither my Praise to graven Images.* So that the meaning of the Words is plainly this; I will not suffer the *Israelites* to go unpunished, if they give my Glory to another. Now what is this to the purpose? Idols are indeed distinct things from God, and the Honour paid to them is an Affront offered to the Divine Glory: But Christ is not a different Person from God, but his Son and Messenger, and consequently One with the Father¹, and the Honour paid to him tends to that of the Father.

¹ Joh. 10. 30. & 17. 22. & 14. 9. 1 Joh. 2. 23.

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Thirdly, they urge Jer. 17. 5. *Cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man.* But *Jesus Christ as Mediator* was explained. MAN. *Ans.* What has this Text to do with the Honour paid to Christ as *Mediator*? They are here reproved, who put their Confidence merely in Human Assistance; Man therefore signifies frail and mortal Man, as appears by what immediately follows, *and maketh Flesh his Arm*, i. e. who trusteth to the Strength of Men, who are but perishable Flesh. Such as these do indeed cast away their Confidence in God, rely upon weak Man, and therefore are threatned with a severe Punishment. But our Lord *Jesus Christ* exalted into Heaven, is not Flesh, but a quickning Spirit, having Dominion over all things, and is endued by God the Father with Omiscience and with Power. Whoever therefore trusts in him, does not rely in Flesh, nor cast away his Confidence in God, but obeys and depends upon God alone.

As to the other Objections which they urge, they are either included in these we have already refuted, and consequently need no other Answer; or else regard the *Kingly Office* of Christ, which they do not believe as yet to be administred by our Saviour. But having in another place treated of that Office at large, and answered all Objections against Christ's actual Administration of his Kingdom, we shall not repeat any thing on that Subject here.

S E C T. III.

Of Worshipping Saints and Angels.

It may be demanded, what Thoughts we have of the worshipping of Angels and Saints departed, as practised in the Church of *Rome*. In order to pass a true Judgment thereon, it is requisite to know what sort of Worship the *Romanists* do pay, and would have to be paid to them. They here distinguish between the words *Latria* and *Doulia*: The former they say, is a Worship owing to God alone; whilst the latter being of an inferior degree may be paid to Saints and Angels. But in truth, this Distinction is not at all to be admitted,

The Romanists Opinion concerning the Worship of Saints and Angels, examined.

mitted, since it has no Foundation in Scripture, where the words *Latria* and *Doulia* are promiscuously used for the Worship paid to God. However, they tell us that the *Invocation* made to Saints and Angels is not for the obtaining Remission of Sins, Eternal Life, or any such like Favour; but only that they, as being near and intimate Favourites of Heaven, might present the Petitioners Prayers to God, who being themselves unworthy to have a direct and immediate recourse to him, stand in need of the Intercession of the Saints, to carry up their Petitions. Tho the Learned will not pretend this *Invocation* to be necessary, yet by their condemning others who do not join with them in it, and by their whole Practice in having more frequent recourse to departed Saints than to the Angels, or to God himself, they seem to avow the necessity thereof. But for a more particular Refutation of this erroneous Opinion we say,

Arguments
against the
worship-
ping of
Angels.

First, with respect to the *worshipping of Angels*;
(1.) That there is no Command in Scripture for any such thing, nor any Token of its being pleasing to God; no Promise of a Reward to those who perform it, no Threatning of a Punishment to the neglect thereof, nor any Instance of such an *Invocation*: and consequently it cannot be concluded to be a Worship grateful to God. On the contrary, 'tis sinful, since it cannot proceed from a thorow Conviction of Mind, that it is well-pleasing to the Divine Being. But (2.) Angels are not always present with those who pray to them, and consequently cannot always hear their Requests: Nor are they *Kαρδιωγράται*, *Searchers of Hearts*, and therefore cannot tell whether the Petitions offered to them proceed from a pious or an hypocritical Breast. Unless then they would ascribe *Omnipresence* and *Omniscience* to the Angels (which is to make them all GODS) they cannot with any Assurance of Faith offer up their Supplications to them. (3.) The worshipping of Angels is expressly prohibited in Scripture¹, nay they themselves have expressly declined any such Worship².

¹ Col. 2. 18. ² Rev. 19. 10. & 22. 9.

To this they object, That in the Old Testament we read of Angels being worshipped by *Abraham*, by *Lot*, that the *Laſt* prayed to them, and *Jacob* beg'd a Blessing of an Angel, that *Joſhua* worshipped one, &c. *Anſw.* (1.) Thoſe Angels that are ſaid to be worshipped, were not abſent but preſent. (2.) They then appeared in the Name of God as his Meſſengers, and repreſenting his Perſon received the Honour due to him. But now all Power is transfer'd on the Lord *Jeſus*, and the Angels themſelves are his miniſtring Spirits. (3.) As to the Inſtances, *Abraham* worshipped the Angels with a Civil Adoration, thinking them to be only Men; and ſo he fell down before the Sons of *Heth*, as *Jacob* did ſeven times before his Brother *Eſau*; Proſtration being the cuſtomary Civility of the *Eastern Nations*. (4.) The reſt made their Addreſſes to the Angels as preſent, and bearing the Character of God's Ambaſſadors; particularly *Jacob*, who beg'd the Angels Bleſſing, does not petition that he ſhould pray to God for him, but that as God's Meſſenger he himſelf would bleſs him.

Secondly, as to the *Deceas'd Saints*, 'tis to be pre-miſed, That the *Romaniſts* have form'd to themſelves, and worſhip a great many Saints, who had never ſo much as a Being in this World; ſuch as *St. Chriſtopher*, *St. Longinus*, *St. George*, *St. Roche*, with abundance of others to be met with in their *Golden Legend*: That many others were ſo far from being Saints, that they were cruel and inhuman, ſuch as *Dominick* the Author of the Inquiſition; or fooliſh and ignorant, ſuch as their *St. Francis*, who taking the Words of our Saviour, *Go preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, in a literal Senſe, was ſo idle as to preach to Birds and Beaſts. Laſtly, That the real Saints have their Hiſtory ſo fill'd with Romance and unbecoming Fictions, that it is hard to find any Truth in them. But ſuppoſing that there were really ſuch Saints, and that their Lives and Actions are faithfully handed down to us, yet it would be eaſy to prove that *Invocation* is

¹ Gen. 18. 2. ² Ch. 19. 1. ³ Ver. 19. &c. ⁴ Gen. 32. 10.
Joſ. 5. 14, 15. ⁵ Gen. 23. 7. ⁶ Gen. 33.

none of their due, and that for these plain Reasons: (1.) Because it is not certain, that the Saints immediately after their Departure out of this Life are in possession of compleat Happiness, and the Vision of God. That they are as happy as their State will allow, and enjoy the Hopes of a future Life and the Peace of a good Conscience, admits of no question: But who shall tell us, what and how great that Happiness is? Certain it is that they are not perfectly happy, since the last Enemy *Death*, over whom they are to triumph, is not as yet destroyed. But (2.) suppose them to be perfectly happy, They can no more hear the Prayers of their absent Petitioners, than the Angels can, unless they were more *Omniscient* than these. (3.) Such are said to know and mind nothing that is done under the Sun.

Arguments
against
both.

But for a farther and fuller Confutation of this erroneous Doctrine, we shall offer such Arguments as strike in common against this Invocation both of Saints and Angels. First, this their *Invocation* is an Affront offered to God, since 'tis applied to Saints and Angels without his express Command or Approbation; and is no less a Reproach cast upon the Divine Goodness, as if they were more ready to succour us than God himself. Secondly, it is an Affront offered to our Saviour Jesus Christ, since 'tis making them so many Mediators between God and us, in derogation of Him who is the sole Mediator, the *Man Jesus*. Nor, thirdly, is it less dishonouring the very Saints themselves; since, (1.) They as the Favourites of Heaven are supposed to be more merciful than God himself. (2.) Since they present such Prayers to God, of the Intention with which they were offered, they are wholly ignorant. (3.) Because it redounds to their Disgrace, to have the Prayers of the Wicked and Hypocrites which they prefer rejected by God. But, (4.) Such a Practice is destructive of true Religion and Piety, and that upon these accounts: (1.) Because by introducing a formal specious Humility, it destroys the true Humility which is owing to the

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Majesty of God. (2.) Under the pretence of more easily obtaining Mercy, it has introduc'd a Sauciness in asking any thing, how unreasonable and dishonest for ever *. (3.) Under the Conceit of the Merits attributed to the Saints, and which they believe may be applied to all those who call upon them, Men are confirm'd in a dissolute course of Life.

Upon the whole matter, the true Honour we ought to pay to the Saints deceased is this; To proclaim their Praises, celebrate their Memories, as those who have approv'd themselves Champions in the Cause of Christ, and to thank God for having inspired such weak and frail Men with his holy Spirit, to undergo so much for his sake. This, and to imitate their good Examples, would be the greatest Honour we could do them, without any Derogation of the Glory of God.

C H A P. IX.

Of the several parts of Piety, and herein of the Internal Acts thereof. •

HAVING discoursed of the *Object*, we proceed to consider the several *Parts of Piety*, viz. *Internal* and *External*: Accordingly, the Actions of which true *Piety* towards God is compos'd, are also *Internal* or *External*; of the former of which we will treat in the several Sections of this Chapter, and they are *Love, Honour, Faith, Hope* and *Fear*.

* See on this occasion Erasmus's *Pilgrimage for Religion* sake.

S E C T. I.

Of Love towards God.

*Love to-
wards God
of two
sorts.*

Our *Love* towards God, considers him either as the chief Good, and the Fountain of all Happiness, and then 'tis a Desire of Union with him, and enjoying his Favours; or else as a Legislator, and then our Love consists in obeying all his Commands. This latter is founded on the former; for 'tis because we love God as the supreme Good, the Source of Happiness, and desire to be united to him as such, that therefore we obey him as our Legislator, in order to enjoy him as our chief Good.

*Its various
Accepta-
tions.*

Now Love towards God, taken in the latter Sense, denotes either Universal Holiness, and all the Duties prescrib'd us by God, which takes in the whole of Religion; or else it denotes all those Duties which more immediately relate to God, which is *Piety*. But in neither of these Senses do we at present take this Love towards God. We here consider it as a part, or special and inward Act of *Piety*; and in this more strict Sense we take it to denote *That Affection, whereby we desire, that such things be done by us, as well as others, as are well-pleasing in the sight of God, that so we may obtain an intimate Conjunction with him.*

*Motives
to it.*

Now the *Motives* of such a Love, are all founded on this single Consideration, That God is the supreme Good, and the Fountain of all Happiness: For we love God either, (1.) For the Excellency of his Nature, as being the Best, the Greatest, and consequently the most Amiable of Beings. Or, (2.) For his surprising Benefactions to us in his Works of Creation, Providence, and especially Redemption, wherein he has given the highest Testimonies of his Love towards us. Or, (3.) For those many and singular Favours which every one of us in particular has received from the Divine Bounty. All these are as so many Cords and Bands of Love, which if duly considered, would closely unite us to God.

But

But whereas it often happens, that Men through a *The Signs of it.*
fond Self-love are deceived with a false Appearance, and think they love God, when they really do not,

or at least not so much as they ought; therefore will we lay down some Marks or Tokens, whereby every Man upon a due Search may discover whether the true Love of God be and reigns in his Heart. The first Token is, not to be fond of this World or the Enjoyments of it, that being contrary to and inconsistent with a true Love to God'. The World offers us sensual and present Enjoyments; God commands us to deny these, and seek for those that are spiritual and future. Now, having two such opposite Masters, we cannot heartily love the one, while we are fond of the other; we cannot obey at the same time God and Mammon. A second Sign is, when we take pleasure in doing our selves, or in seeing others do that which is acceptable to God; and are troubled when either we or others displease him. With such a Love as this were *David* and *Lot* endued'. Another Token is, when we grieve if we do not constantly make some Progresses and Advances in Piety; it being the nature of a Lover, to get as near to the Object beloved as possible. The fourth Sign is an ardent Desire of conversing with God, in Prayer, Reading, and Hearing his Word, and in all the publick Ordinances that he has appointed. A fifth is, a flagrant Zeal for God's Glory, when we are more offended to hear his Name blasphemed, than at all the Reproaches cast upon our selves. The sixth and last is a Love of our Neighbour, shewing it self by its Works; for if we have not this, 'tis in vain to pretend to any Love of God'.

The Love we ought to bear to God should be without measure; the more intense, the more excellent and grateful to him it is. This our Saviour expresses¹ by *Loving God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Strength*: That is, we must love him above all things, not suffer any, how near or dear soever,

¹ See to this purpose 1 John 2. 15, 16. Rom. 8. 7. Jam. 4. 4. Mat. 6. 24. ² Ps. 119. 136, 139. 2 Pet. 2. 8. ³ 1 John 4. 20. 21. ⁴ Mat. 22. 37.

to stand in competition with him. We must renounce all, nay even Life it self, rather than be allur'd or terrify'd to do any thing that may displease him.

Its Opposite, Hatred.

The *Opposite* to Love is *Hatred*, not towards God as the Supreme Good, for 'tis impossible for any Man to hate him as such: But towards him as a Legislator, and consequently prescribing many things ungrateful to a Man's Concupiscence, which he will not part with that he may please God. Now not to obey him as a Legislator, is to hate him. But more strictly speaking, it denotes a Hatred either of Religion in general, of which Number are Atheists or Men given over to a reprobate Sense; or of the Christian Religion in particular, and with such a Hatred are They moved who persecute the Church. However, by Hatred we here understand such as is properly an Aversion to God, and the things which are pleasing to him; which is either immediately or directly such, which we suppose few or no Men are guilty of, it being peculiar to the Devils: or else such whereby their Affections are carried out to things plainly contrary to God.

The Degrees by which Men arrive to it

The Steps by which Men arrive to such a Hatred, are, (1.) They bear too inordinate a Love to themselves, and thereby covet whatever is pleasing to them, how contrary soever to the Divine Command. (2.) They hate the Law of God, as lying cross to this their Desire, and would have it removed as an Obstacle to their Pleasure. (3.) They set themselves against God as the Author of this Law. (4.) And lastly, they abhor God as being the Revenger of Sin, and fly from his Presence as from an angry Judge.

S E C T. II.

Of Honouring God.

Honour due to God.

Honour as due to God, admits likewise of various Acceptations in Scripture: For sometimes 'tis taken to denote the whole of Religion, and all the Duties prescribed us; and in this sense it is distinguish'd into

¹ John 8. 49. Mal. 1. 6.

Internal and *External*. But here we understand by it that inward Affection of the Mind, whereby we ascribe to God in our Hearts the Praise due to his Name for all his wonderful and divine Works: which usually expresses it self by two external Signs or Tokens, viz. (1.) By praising and proclaiming his Divine Name¹. (2.) By directing all our Actions to the Honour and Glory of God: since 'tis thus that he is glorified by them².

The Motives to excite us to honour God, are much *Its Mo-* the same with those that move us to love him, viz. *tives*. The Excellency of his own Nature, and his Goodness towards us: tho they may admit of this small Distinction; That in the Duty of Love they are consider'd as conducing to our Good, but in that of *Honour*, as advancing the Sovereign Majesty of God, which ought to be reverenc'd by us with the deepest Humility. This Excellency and Majesty, the Foundation of our *honouring* God, is most visible and best known by his Works; in the solemnizing of which Works, whether of Mercy towards the Good, or in punishing the Wicked, we in our Hymns and Praises celebrate the Divine Attributes of Wisdom, Goodness, Justice and Power. Such Honour we find paid to the Divine Being all along in the Sacred Writings, particularly in the Book of Psalms, where God is praised for Mercies receiv'd, for Deliverances wrought, and for the Severity of his Justice shewn to obstinate and impenitent Sinners.

There are several things that are opposite or con- *Its Oppo-* trary to the *Honour* we owe to God. The first is an *sites*; *Omission* of those things which tend to his *Honour*: 1. *Omission* and this proceeds chiefly from a too eager pursuit after *and Hypo-* the things of this World, which divert the Man from *crisy*. God; he being so wholly taken up with those things, that such as tend to the honouring of God are neglected by him. Near a-kin to this is *Hypocrisy*, when a Man pretends to honour God by some external Acts, whilst

¹ 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rev. 4. 9, 11. Is. 6. 3. and throughout the whole Book of Psalms. ² 'Tis in this Sense we are to understand Mat. 5. 16. & 1 Pet. 2. 12.

in his Mind and in true Holiness he is at a distance from him: Of this nature are they who are exact in the performance of some outward Ceremonies, whilst their Conscience is not purged from dead Works.

2. *Blasphemy, its several kinds.*

Another thing contrary to the *Honour* we owe to God, is *Blasphemy*, of which there are several sorts: (1.) *Direct* and *downright Blasphemy* properly so called; when a Man either attributes any thing to God, that is plainly repugnant to his Nature and Attributes, as if he should say that he is Cruel, Unjust, the Author of Sin, &c. Or when he robs God of that which belongs to him, and without which his Nature, or at least the Divine Attributes would be prejudiced; as if he should deny God to be Eternal, Wise, Powerful, &c. (2.) Another kind of *Blasphemy*, is when the Honour due to God alone is ascribed to the Creatures, for this tends to the Derogation of the Divine Glory. (3.) Lastly, that is a sort of *Blasphemy*, whereby a Man who does not blaspheme the Name of God himself, is however the occasion of others blaspheming it. Of this nature are the Sins of those Men, who profess to be more religious than others, and have, or at least pretend to have, attain'd to a clearer Knowledge of the Divine Will.

What makes a Man guilty of downright Blasphemy.

Now to denominate a Man guilty of *Blasphemy* properly so called, which is the first and highest kind of it, two things are requisite; First, an *Intention* in those who blaspheme voluntarily, without being forced upon it by any one: And then a *Knowledge* that what they utter is blasphemous. What therefore is utter'd without such an *Intention* and *Knowledge*, tho it should be *Blasphemy*, yet does not make a Man guilty of it properly so called. Hence it is that tho *Paul* says of himself, that he was a *Blasphemer*, yet adds, that what he did was through *Ignorance* and *Unbelief*.

3. *Irreverence to his Word.*

A third Opposite to the *Honour* due to God, is *Irreverence* to his Sacred Word; when a Man speaks of it as of a common Writing, and sometimes applies Sentences taken out of it to mean and idle purposes, purely for the Jest's sake. Now what a Derogation of the

Glory of God is this, who requires that we should speak of him and Divine things with the highest Reverence? His Word is too sacred to be made the Subject of a profane Jest or impious Drollery, and ought not to be us'd, but upon weighty and serious Occasions.

The fourth Opposite is that *preposterous Honour*, 4. *A pre-* whereby some Men pretend to reverence God by such *posterior* things wherein he is not honoured; either by obser- *Honour.* ving the Traditions of Men, or worshipping him by Images, which is a high Affront offer'd to him, since thereby the Invisible God is likened to a Material and Corruptible Creature.

S E C T. III.

Of Faith, or Trust in God.

Faith in God is not exactly the same with *Faith* in Christ Jesus, of which we have already treated at large, as summarily comprehending the whole Duty of a Christian: For *Faith* in this place denotes a special and inward Act of *Piety* distinct from all the other Acts; and is properly an *Assurance* and Effect of the general Faith, whereby we depend wholly on God, and expect from him all good things, especially such as are necessary to Salvation, and a Deliverance from all hurtful things, especially such as are prejudicial to our chief and greatest End.

The Motives we have to such an *Assurance* or *Trust*, *its Mo-* are, (1.) The *Omnipotence* of God, by which he is able to do whatever we expect from him. (2.) His *Wisdom*, whereby he knows what we want, and after what manner 'tis most convenient to help us. (3.) His *Goodness*, by which he is inclin'd to bestow upon us whatever is truly Good and necessary for us. And, (4.) His *Veracity*, whereby he is faithful and just in performing his Promises. From hence it follows, that the Faithful and Religious alone can with any confidence rely upon him, since to them alone he has promis'd his Grace and Assistance: Whereas to the

† Psal. 33. 18, 19. & 34. 16. & 37. 17, 18, 19, 28.

Wicked,

Wicked, persevering in an impenitent State, no such Promise is made, but a severe Denunciation of sudden Destruction', and therefore all their Confidence is vain and will fail them².

What is requisite for our due Reliance on God.

Now that our *Assurance* may be sincere, 'tis requisite, (1.) That it be placed in God alone, esteeming all human Assistances to be of no avail without the Divine Favour and Protection. They are therefore highly to blame who do not sincerely and wholly put their Trust in God, but have recourse to human Helps, and accordingly place a greater or less Confidence in God, as they see those outward means to be more or less able to assist them. This is not to trust to God, but in Arms of Flesh, which may, and too often do fail us. (2.) 'Tis farther requisite, that our *Trust* in God be conformable to his Promises, which have always a reference to our Good, either as it concerns our Bodies and this animal Life, or our Souls and the Spiritual Eternal Life. According to this twofold Good, the Promises of God are likewise of two sorts. (1.) God promises the Spiritual Blessings of a future Life to those who love him, as their true and proper Good, requiring no other Condition but their Faith and Obedience. (2.) As for the good things of this Life, our Lord likewise promises them in the new Covenant to those that are his, but not as their chief Good; making this tacit *Proviso*, unless they be inconsistent with the Glory of God, and our everlasting Welfare.

1. For Spiritual Blessings.

According to this twofold Consideration of the Divine Promises under the New Testament, the Godly ought to place a double Reliance upon God. First, as to Spiritual and Eternal Blessings, they may expect absolutely to receive them from the Hands of God *i. e.* upon no other Condition than their Faith and Obedience, since he requires no more³.

An Objection answered.

Some one may say; May a godly Man then confide in his own Works, as so many Merits, whereby he deserves Eternal Life? *Ans.* By no means: For all Notion of Merit is precluded, nor can we without

¹ Psal. 34. 17. & 37. 17, 20. Rom. 2. 6. ² Job 8. 1, 12, 13, 14. Prov. 10. 28. Wisd. 5. 15. ³ 1 John 3. 21, 22.

the Divine Grace attain Salvation, since 'tis God alone who freely pardons our Sins, and bestows his Grace upon us that we may obey him. But upon obeying the Commands of God, we do perform the Condition which he requires, in order by his Grace to obtain Eternal Life: and having done this, we may safely depend upon God that he will perform what he has promised. This made St. Paul to cry out', *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day, &c.*

But secondly, with respect to the Temporal Blessings of this Life, we may not expect them from God, unless with the foremention'd Condition; viz. provided the Acquisition of them be not detrimental to his Glory and our Happiness. For it may so happen, that a quiet and peaceable Fruition of the things of this Life may beget in us a Lukewarmness in the business of Religion; whereas Adversity may prove a Spur to quicken us in it. God therefore, who in his Wisdom knows what is best for us, and is ready in his infinite Goodness to bestow it upon us, kindly withholds what is prejudicial to our Salvation, however grateful and desirable it may seem to us. But to be more particular; for a Man to put his Confidence in God with respect to the Business he undertakes in this Life, these things are requisite: (1.) That he be not only in general an honest Man, but propose to himself a just and righteous Cause for his End; else he cannot expect any Success from a Just and Holy God. (2.) That he make use of those Means which God has appointed, not as if he were wholly to rely upon them, but must trust the Event and Issue of them to God alone. (3.) He must put up his Supplications to God for his Assistance, and submit all things to his wise Disposal.

The Opposites to Faith or Trusting in God are several, *Its Opposites;* some criminal in the Defect, others in the Excess. *i. In Defect;* those in the Defect may all of them be reduced to few Species under one general Head, viz. *Diffidence*.

Its several or *Distrust*, which wholly casts away all Confidence in
forts, God in times of Adversity, and is an arrainging of his
 Power, Wisdom, Goodness and Veracity all at once.

Murmur- Of this *Distrust* there are several sorts, the first of
ing a- which is *murmuring* against God, as if he had dealt
gainst, unjustly by us: And this is such a kind of *Diffidence*
 as sets Bounds (as it were) to God's absolute Right and
 Dominion over us. To this we may annex an anxious
 Solicitude and Care for the things of this Life, as if
 God's Providence had fail'd and neglected us, and we
 were left to shift for our selves.

And tempt- The second kind of *Distrust* is, *tempting* of God.
ing of God. This has frequently been look'd upon as an Error in
 the *Excess*, as presuming too far upon the Divine Assis-
 tance; which some infer from our Saviour's Reply to
 the Devil, *Mat. 4. 7.* taken out of *Deut. 6. 16.* 'Tis
written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
 But if we enquire into the Nature of this Tempting of
 the *Israelites* to which our Lord alludes, we shall find
 it was not *too much*, but *too little Confidence* they
 were guilty of, and that they were rather *too incredu-*
lous than *too presumptuous*. To tempt God therefore
 is to desire from him an Experiment or Sign which
 ought not to be requir'd for the proof of any thing,
 but wherein we ought directly to acquiesce. A Man
 may be guilty of it these ways: (1.) When he re-
 quires a farther proof to be given to a thing, the Truth
 of which is already evinc'd by sufficient Arguments. (2.)
 When he doubts of the Will of God in a certain thing,
 concerning which the Divine Will has already been
 sufficiently reveal'd, and of which consequently he
 might and ought to have been assur'd: For this is as
 much as to require a new Revelation to attest to the
 old one, and is no less than calling the Veracity of
 God into question. (3.) When any Man by his enor-
 mous and repeated Crimes provokes the Patience of
 God, without any regard had to his Threatnings:
 that is, so lives as if he would try whether there be a
 God; and if there be, whether he sees his Actions;
 and if he does, whether he will or can punish them.
 (4.) When a Man in Adversity prefixes a time to God
 for his Deliverance. To this may be added *Impati-*
ence and Faint-heartedness in Religion, upon the ac-
 count

count of the Delay of the last Judgment, as if God put off the performance of his Promises beyond the time. In opposition to this, St. James informs us, that the Lord does not delay his coming, as if he were unmindful of his Promises, but because being a tender Lover of Mankind he would have many to be saved.

The Fault in *Excess* is a Man's too great Confidence 2. In the of himself, which is of two sorts: (1.) When a Man *Excess*, too puts too great a Reliance on his own Strength; for much Confidence the more he trusts to himself, the less Confidence does he place in God. By this Over-Confidence in his own Strength, did Peter (after his bold Asseveration, *tho all Men deny thee yet will not I*) fall into that great Sin of denying his Lord and Master. (2.) When a Man applies to himself the Divine Favour, tho by reason of his Sins he ought rather to be afraid of the Divine Wrath and Punishment. But the Rashness as well as Folly of such a presumptive Assurance we have elsewhere evinc'd.

SECT. VI.

Of Hope in God.

Hope is much of the same nature with Faith or Hope in Trusting in God, it being the Expectation of receiving some future Good from God and Christ: Only with this difference, that Faith has regard to the Person from whom Good is expected, whilst Hope has properly an Eye upon the Good it self.

We need not therefore say much of this Duty, *Its Motive*, since it falls in so much with the former. The *Motive* thereof, as well as that of Faith, are the Divine Promises, and these very strongly confirm'd to us, whereon our Hope may depend.

Its *Object* are all the Divine Blessings promised in the Gospel, Spiritual and Temporal, with respect both to a future and the present Life; but still so as is most conformable to the Divine Promises.

Jam. 5. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 3, 21.

Is more or less perfect, *Hope* is more or less perfect, and that upon two accounts; with respect either to its efficient Causes, or to its own Essence. First, with respect to its Causes or Motives. Thus one sort of *Hope* is founded on the express Promises of God, and the strong Confirmation of them; of which St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John, make mention¹. The other is that which arises from reasoning on the Goodness, Power, Justice and Veracity of God, and from Instances of the like nature; from whence a Man infers, in any particular Case, that he may expect to receive from God the Good which he desires.

2. With respect to its Nature. *Hope* is more or less perfect, upon the account of its Nature or Essence: For with respect to this, *Hope* may either precede our Duty, and be grounded on the performance of the Condition, which in some measure may be perfect; or else it may follow the doing of our Duty, and then 'tis a certain expectation of some Good that will undoubtedly be obtained in consequence of the Condition's being already perform'd.

It confirms our Love to Piety. Such a *Hope* as this confirms in us a Love of Piety, and renders us averse to Sin. For since through a certain expectation of Eternal Life, we are become sensible of the highest Pleasure and greatest Happiness that this World can afford, we are heartily desirous of retaining it, and shake hands with our Lusts that would bereave us of it.

Its two Contraries, viz. Presumption and Despair. Two things are contrary to this Duty of *Hope*, viz. *Presumption* on the one hand, and *Despair* on the other. (1.) A Man may be said to *presume* with respect to his everlasting Salvation, when he hopes, tho he has no reason for so doing; i. e. thinks himself holy and in a State of Salvation, when he is not; or else considering his present Condition and Circumstances, he promises to himself Eternal Happiness, as if he should never fall, but still persevere in a course of Piety. Again he may be said to *presume*, who on other accounts does certainly and assuredly expect to

¹ Acts 24. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 21. 1 Joh. 3. 3.

receive that from God, which he has neither promised nor given him any reason to hope for; of which nature are many things relating to this Life. (2.) *Despair* is when a Man either wholly renounces all *Hope* of the Divine Favour, and consequently of his Eternal Happiness; or else in some particular Case distrusts the Divine Assistance. The former of these is properly **DESPAIR**, and is no question, considered in its own nature, a greater Crime than **PRESUMPTION** it self, since it abandons all the Hopes and Expectations which a Man might have in the Power and Goodness of God.

S E C T. V.

Of Fear, a Duty to God.

The *Fear* of God, as well as the other Acts of *Piety*, admits of various Acceptations in Scripture. Sometimes 'tis taken in an extensive Sense, so as to denote the whole of Religion¹. Sometimes in a stricter Sense, to signify the whole of our Duty towards God². At other times in the strictest Sense, it denotes that Fear which the Consideration of the Divine Majesty and Power produces in us; whereby being afraid of his Wrath and the Punishment that attends it, we dare not commit any thing contrary to his Commands, by which he may be offended. 'Tis in this last Sense we here take the Word, as making a special part of *Piety*, or our Duty towards God.

The *Motives* to such a *Fear* are, (1.) A Consideration of the Sovereign Dominion and Majesty, which God claims to himself upon the account of Creation, and other Benefactions³. (2.) Of the Divine Omnipresence and Omniscience, whereby he is present to all our Actions, knows our most secret Thoughts, and will pass a Judgment upon them ac-

¹ Deut. 10. 12. Ps. 34. 12. ² Deut. 6. 13. Jon. 1. 9.
Mat. 4. 10. 2 Kings 17. 25, 34. ³ Mal. 1. 6. Jer. 5. 22.
cordingly

cordingly at the last Day'. (3.) Of the Divine Power, which no Man can resist'. (4.) Of the manifold Blessings of God, whereby he demonstrates the height of his Bounty towards us, that so we might not offend so gracious a Father, nor be deprived of his Benefits'. (5.) Of the most severe Threatnings of God, that so we might avoid them'. (6.) Instances of Divine Punishments, especially such as were attended with a dreadful Destruction, as of *Pharaoh* overwhelmed with his whole Army in the Red Sea'; of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, who were swallowed by the Earth'. To which may be added the Instances of Spiritual Punishments inflicted on the Minds of Men'. (7.) And lastly, a Consideration of the last Judgment, wherein God will manifest his Glory, and render to every Man according to his Works'. All these Considerations are so many *Motives*, which if we would duly lay to heart, would not fail exciting in us a Fear of God.

Either previous to or consequent of Sin.

This *Fear* of God admits of a twofold Division. First, It is divided, (1.) into a *Fear* that precedes Sin, or rather is a Restraint whereby a Man is kept from falling into Sin; and is a Fear of losing the Divine Favour if we abandon Piety, and turn aside to Ungodliness. This is laudable, peculiar to the Faithful, and is recommended in Scripture'. (2.) Into a *Fear* that follows Sin, which is the *Fear* of Condemnation, raised in a Sinner who is without hopes of Pardon, who fears God as an incensed Judge, and one that will take vengeance on him for his Sins, and who is by the Testimony of his own Conscience in a state of Damnation. Such a Fear as this cannot be in any true Believer'.

Either Filial or Servile.

Secondly, *Fear* is either *Filial* or *Servile*. (1.) A *Filial Fear* arises from the Consideration both of the

'Ps. 139. 7, &c. Heb. 4. 13. Rom. 2. 16. 'Exod. 15. 16. 'Jer. 5. 24. Ps. 130. 4. Philip. 2. 12, 13. 'Mat. 10. 28. Luk. 12. 4, 5. Heb. 12. 28, 29. 'Exod. 14. 'Num. 16. 'Rom. 11. 21. Rev. 14. 7. & 15. 3, 4. '1 Pet. 1. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11, &c. 'Heb. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 27. 'Rom. 8. 1. 1 Joh. 4. 18.

Divine Goodness and Severity, and is joined with a Love to God; whereby a Believer loving him as a Gracious Father, is afraid of offending and provoking him to Displeasure, lest he should be cast out of his Gracious Presence for ever. This is a generous and ingenuous *Fear*, such as has an Eye to everlasting Punishments, and produces a chearful Obedience to the Divine Commands. (2.) A *Servile Fear* proceeds only from the Consideration of Punishment, when a Man looking upon God as a severe Master, is as it were constrained to Obedience by the sole Fear of being punished: Nor does he obey cordially and sincerely, but only shews it by some forc'd and external Acts. Such a *Fear* argues a disingenuous Mind, and is unbecoming a true Believer.

But it may be asked, whether all Fear of Punishment be *Servile*, and whether all Obedience arising thence be disingenuous? *Ans.* By no means. For as we just now observ'd, there is some fear of Punishment proper to the Children of God, whereby they are quickened and excited to Holiness. That this is not a *Servile Fear* appears from hence, because God exhorts us to Obedience, not only by proposing a Reward, but also threatening a Punishment. Now it is not unbecoming us to be moved to our Duty by such Arguments as God is pleas'd to use to excite us thereto. Nay the Scripture prescribes to us such a *Fear*, by which it constrains us to obey God. Lastly, that Obedience which proceeds from Faith is sincere and laudable, and becoming the Children of God. Now Faith not only regards the Promises, but likewise the Threatnings of God, since it assents to all that is uttered by him.

The *Marks* of the *Fear* due to God are chiefly discernible by its Effects, since these if Genuine are the most assured Evidences of the sincerity of our Fear. These Tokens are, (1.) A Hatred of Sin^s, avoiding all, especially secret Sins, which might have been committed without the Cognizance of, or at least without being punished by Man. (2.) Abstaining from those

A Query answered.

Its genuine Tokens.

Prov. 8. 13. & 3. 7. & 16. 6.

O o

things,

Divine

things, of which any question is made, whether they be lawful or not; since he who truly fears God will never commit any thing, of the lawfulness of which he doubts'. (3.) An ardent Desire of doing good'. (4.) That we study not to please Men only, but whatever we do, we must do it heartily, as serving God'. (5.) That we do nothing displeasing to God out of fear of Men, since he is more to be feared than they, who is able to inflict the forest of Punishments on the Transgressors of his Laws'. (6.) And lastly, Constancy under Temptations'.

Its Opposites in the Defect.

The *Opposites* to the Fear of God, are such as are criminal either in the *Defect* or *Excess*. Of the first sort are, (1.) A want of such a Fear'. (2.) A provoking God by the Commission of most enormous Sins'. (3.) Murmuring against God, by being impatient under Afflictions, which arises from a certain boldness in confronting the Divine Being'. (4.) Carnal Security, by which a Man even in the midst of his Sins, fancies and promises to himself, that all is well enough with him'.

In the Excess.

The *Opposite* to Fear in the *Excess* is *Δεισιδαιμονία*, or *Superstition*, which is, too great a Fear of God, whereby 'tis supposed that he is offended at those things, with which he is not at all displeased. This is chiefly the case of those Men, who indeed reverence God, but being of no sound Judgment, are like Children frightened at a Shadow.

* Rom. 14. 23. * 2 Cor. 7. 1. Phil. 2. 12, 13. * Eph. 6. 6. 1 Thess. 2. 4. Gal. 1. 10, &c. * Mat. 10. 28. *Thus much St. Peter told the Jewish Sanhedrim, Acts 5. 29. and recommends to Believers,* 1 Epist. 3. 14, 15. * Prov. 14. 26. Eccclus. 34. 14, &c. * Ps. 36. 2. Rom. 3. 18. * Deut. 4. 25. & 32. 16, 19, 21. * Exod. 16. 7, 8. *compared with* Ver. 1, 2, 3. Num. 14. 27. & Ch. 16. 11. * 1 Thess. 5. 3. Luk. 21. 34.

C H A P. X.

Of the External Acts of Piety, and first of
ADORATION.

THE *External Acts of Piety* are chiefly these four, *The External Acts of Piety*: *Adoration, Invocation, Confession, and Obedience*: Of which we will treat in so many distinct Chapters.

We shall begin with ADORATION, which properly denotes a low bowing of the Body before him, whom we would honour; which is usually done not only by falling on the Knee, but also by prostrating the whole Body on the Ground. Now of such an *Adoration*, two kinds are mentioned in Scripture, viz. (1.) A *Civil Adoration*, such as was usually paid to the *Eastern Kings* and *Grandees*, by Bowing, Kneeling, and sometimes Prostration. (2.) A *Religious Adoration*, whereby we honour God the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; which we have likewise proved¹ to be due to Jesus as he is the *Mediator* between God and us.

This *Religious Adoration* consists partly in the *Mind*, and is an humble Submission and Reverence thereof, arising from the Consideration of the Divine Majesty, Power, Glory and Excellency; and partly in *External Actions*, such as bending the Knee, uncovering the Head, lifting up the Hands, prostrating the whole Body, and all the other Acts which are usual in the external Exercise of Religion. The former of these is the Foundation of the latter; for therefore do we pay to God those outward Acts of Reverence, because in our Minds we acknowledge him to be highly venerable. However, the latter perfects and compleats the former, since the *Inward Adoration* is not perfect, unless the Man testifies it by some *External Acts* of Honour and Reverence.

¹ Ch. 8. §. 2. of this Book.

Why to be
performed
to God.

'Tis true indeed, God has no need of such external Signs, whereby to know the Affection of our Hearts towards him, since he is *Omniscient, the Searcher of the Hearts and Reins*: However, he requires that the whole Duty ow'd by Man to him should be performed, not that he needs it, but because he would have Man be obedient to him in all things. Hence it is that we are commanded to offer up our Bodies a *living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable Service*'. Besides 'tis likewise fit, that as the Soul made and redeem'd by God pays him Homage, so also the Body, partaker of the same Benefits, should bear a part in that Service. Lastly, 'tis requisite that Men should not only give Glory to God, but even glorify him before others, that they also may be excited to do the same, which could not be done with only the Veneration of the Mind. But of this more in another place.

An Obser-
vation con-
cerning
Idolatry.

We shall only here take notice, That as in the true Adoration or worshipping of God the external Gesture of the Body is not sufficient, but the inward Reverence of the Mind is likewise requisite, since God cannot be worshipped by the Body alone: So for the committing of Idolatry, 'tis enough if the outward Signs of Adoration be performed, tho' the Mind may deride and detest them; because if not with the Mind, yet in Fact the Idol is worshipped as if it were a God.

CH A P. XI.

Of INVOCATION.

Invocation, the several parts of it. **I**NVOCATION, which is calling upon the Name of God, is very closely annexed to *Adoration*, and includes it, tho' *Adoration* does not include *Invocation*: For a Man cannot call upon the Name

¹ Rom. 12. 1.

Chap. II. *Body of Divinity.*

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of God, unless he be sensible of his Majesty; but tho he does know the one, yet it does not always follow that he implores the other. So that *Adoration* is a less Degree of Divine Worship than *Invocation*. Now there are three parts of *Invocation*, viz. *Prayer*, *Thanksgiving*, and *Oaths*. Of these it will be requisite to discourse particularly in the three Sections of this Chapter.

S E C T. I.

Of Prayer.

Waving the several Distinctions of PRAYER, ^{*Prayer described.*} we shall only here treat of it, as 'tis a Religious Duty which we owe to God, and define it thus; That *it is an imploring of the Divine Being, whether it be only by the Heart, or likewise with the Mouth, by which we humbly request that God would bestow his Blessings upon our selves or others, with a full Assurance of having our Requests answered through Jesus Christ our Lord.* From this Definition it appears that *Prayer* is the most solemn Worship, by which the highest and greatest Honour is done to God. For he whom we invoke is supposed, (1.) To be *Omniscient*, hearing the Prayers of all wheresoever offer'd, understanding the inarticulate Accents of our Sighs and Groans, and being acquainted with the Necessities of all Men¹. (2.) *Omnipotent*, who is able to give whatever is asked, and render us an effectual Answer². (3.) And *Infinitely Good*, who will when petitioned grant us his Favours and Blessings³. From whence it is plain, that only God, and our Saviour *Jesus Christ* as *Mediator* betwixt him and us, is the proper Object, as of our Piety in general, so of *Prayer* in particular.

Nor is the *Dignity* of *Prayer* less conspicuous, since ^{*its Dignity.*} 'tis a discoursing with God, whereby a Man piercing through all visible things, enters into Heaven it self. This made one of the Antients say, *Would you be al-*

¹ Acts 1. 24.

² Acts 4. 24.

³ Jam. 1. 5 — 17.

ways with God? be frequent in Prayer and reading the Scripture; for in praying we speak to God, and in the Scripture God speaks to us.

We said that Prayer might be made either by the Heart, or with the Mouth, thereby to shew that the outward pronouncing of Words is not necessarily required, but that inward Wishes, Groans, and Sighs are sufficient to make our Requests known to God, who is Omniscient.

Its several kinds,

We added, whereby we request things for our selves and others; thereby to intimate the several kinds of Prayer. One of which is *denos*, Deprecation of the Evil wherewith we are oppressed. Another is *deprecatio*, Supplication for the Good we want. And the third, *intercessio*, Intercession for another, that he may obtain either Deliverance from the Evil he labours under, or the Good which he stands in need of.

But to be more particular in explaining the Nature of this great Duty of PRAYER, we shall in the several Subdivisions, into which we think fit for Method and Perspicuity sake to distinguish this Section, treat, (1.) Of its Necessity. (2.) Of its Matter. (3.) Of the Disposition of him who prays. (4.) Of the necessary Qualifications of Prayer. (5.) Of the Circumstances of Prayer. And (6.) Of its Effect or Event,

I. Of the Necessity of Prayer.

I. The Necessity of Prayer, viewed in our own Indigence.

Our indigent Condition is a sufficient Evidence of the necessity of Prayer, and we can have no stronger Motive to excite us thereto than a thorow Sense of our Wants. For our Life is exposed to various dangers, and we stand in need of all things with respect both to our *Animal* and *Spiritual* State. With respect to the former, we stand in need of all things for the support of Life; owe our Food and our Raiment to the Divine Providence: and besides, are exposed to many Adversities, Miseries, Diseases, Poverty, and sometimes to the Oppressions of other Men; all which are elegantly described by *Job*, and the Son of *Syrach*. With respect to our *Spiritual*

¹ Job 7. 1, 2, 3, & 14. 1, 2. ² Ecclus. 40.

State, we stand in need of all things necessary to Salvation, such as an Illumination of the Understanding in the Knowledge of the Divine Will, exciting and directing the Will to walk in the ways of the Lord, the Gift of the Holy Ghost, Remission of Sins, and Eternal Life: And we are exposed to many and continual Dangers and Temptations from the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, as also to the Persecutions of unbelieving and ungodly Men. Now how should a Sense of these our Wants excite us to make our Supplications to God, who alone is able to supply them?

But besides this, we have the exprefs Command of ^{2. From} our Saviour for so doing, who says, *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you*. Again, *Watch and pray*: And again, *Watch and pray always*. All which he backs with a Promise of our Prayers being heard. Add to this the Examples of many of the Faithful, who by their Prayers have obtain'd very great things at the hands of God. All these things evince the Necessity of Prayer, since 'tis a Duty more beneficial to us than redounding to God's Glory.

But to this it may be said, What occasion is there of praying to God, since without our Prayers he knows what we want, and is so bountiful as to bestow it upon us? *Ans.* This is true: But God is pleased that we should be sensible of our own Wants; for he who wants nothing, or is able to bestow all things upon himself, needs not to pray to another for them. He therefore that petitions another, acknowledges his own Necessities; and consequently by praying to God we own him to be the Author of all Good, not ascribing it to our selves or to blind Fortune.

II. *Of the Subject Matter of Prayer.*

The *Subject Matter of Prayer*, comprehends the ^{2. Its Sub-} Object to whom, the *Persons* for whom, and the *Things* ^{ject Mat-}

¹ Mat. 7. 7. ² Mar. 13. 33. ³ Luk. 21. 36. See to the same purpose Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. ⁴ Mat. 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. Luk. 11. 5, &c. Mat. 18. 19. Joh. 14. 13. & Ch. 16. 23.

for which we pray. The *Object* we have already considered, it now remains that we should touch upon the other two.

*A Man
ought to
pray for
himself.*

As to the *Persons*, they are either a Man's self who prays, or others. That one who believes in God ought to pray for himself, no question can be made, since he best knows his own Wants, and consequently ought to be the most solicitous for his own Welfare and Eternal Salvation.

*A Query
answered.*

But here it may be ask'd, whether it be lawful for a Christian to use any *Imprecation* against himself?

Ans. There are several kinds of *Imprecation*, some lawful, others unlawful. *Imprecation* is lawful, (1.) Which is made in lawful Oaths, when a Man, tho not expressly, yet implicitly wishes some ill to himself, in case he swears falsely. (2.) When it is made out of an ardent Love to our Neighbours, by which we wish a Misfortune to our selves, That they may be freed from the like or more grievous Misery, as in the Instance of *David*¹, *Moses*², and *Paul*³: whose *Imprecations* were not only lawful but highly commendable. (3.) When it is done for the clearing of our Innocence, which cannot be known any other way. But if the *Imprecation* proceeds from any Impatience or Regret at our Misfortune, as was the case of *Moses*, *Job* and *Jonas*⁴, who through the weight of their Misery wish'd for Death, then it is so far excusable as it proceeds from a sudden Passion; but if it be continued in, and proceeds to a murmuring against God, it is highly criminal, which was the case of *Jonah* in particular, for which he was sharply reprov'd by God.

*And for
others.*

That it is also the Duty of the Faithful to pray for others, is likewise abundantly evident from several places of Scripture, such as *Jam.* 5. 16. *Eph.* 6. 18. *1 Tim.* 2. 12. Besides, Men are sometimes commanded to desire others to intercede for them; as *Abimelech* was enjoin'd to beg the Intercession of *Abraham*⁵, and *Job's* Friends to desire him to intercede for them⁶.

¹ 1 Chron. 21. 17. ² Exod. 32. 32. ³ Rom. 9. 3. ⁴ Num. 11. 10, &c. *Job* 6. 8, 9. *Jon.* 4. 8. ⁵ Gen. 20. 7. ⁶ *Job* 42. 8.

Lastly,

Lastly, the Apostles themselves have often recommended themselves to the Prayers of the Faithful¹, and have reciprocally interceded to God for them in their Prayers², as appears more particularly in St. Paul: thereby to shew that it is the peculiar Duty of Pastors by ardent Prayers to recommend to God the Flock committed to their Trust.

But forasmuch as it is a Duty of Charity to pray *How extensive it* for others, it is likewise to be extended to all to whom *we are obliged to be charitable, not only to our Friends and the Good, but also to the Wicked and those that are our Enemies; according to the express Command of our Saviour, Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you³.* But of this more hereafter, when we come to discourse of *Charity* towards our Neighbour.

Here it may be ask'd, whether there be not some *1 Joh. 5.* Men so notoriously wicked, that it is not lawful to *16. ex-* pray to God for them? Of this mind some are, *plained.* grounding their Opinion on these Words of St. John, *1 Epist. 5. 16. If any Man see his Brother sin a Sin which is not unto Death, he shall ask, and he shall give him Life for them that sin not unto Death: There is a Sin unto Death, I do not say that he shall pray for it.* *Ans.* Here is no express Prohibition in this place; the most that can be concluded from it is only this, that we are not obliged to pray for one who sins unto Death: However, all things to which we are not obliged are not upon that account unlawful. Nor even can that Inference be justly made, but only This, that if we pray for one who sins unto Death, *i. e.* one who perseveres in a State of Impenitence to his Death, he shall not obtain the lengthning his Life. This is plain from what the Apostle says on the other hand, of our praying for one who does not sin unto Death, *viz.* that God will grant us the Life of him for whom we pray.

¹ Rom. 15. 30. Eph. 6. 19. Col. 4. 3. ² 1 Thess. 5. 25. ³ 2 Thess. 3. 1. Heb. 13. 18. ⁴ Rom. 1. 9, 10. Eph. 1. 16, 17, 18. Phil. 1. 9, 10. Coloss. 1. 9. ⁵ 1 Thess. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20, 21. ⁶ Mat. 5. 44.

Prayers for
the Dead
unneces-
sary, use-
less, and
superfluous.

Again it may be asked, Whether we ought to pray for the Dead? This the Church of Rome maintains, at least it teaches that Prayers may be of very great use to the Dead for their Deliverance out of Purgatory, and the cruel Torment thereof. Of Purgatory we shall treat in another Place, and at present shall briefly shew that those Prayers are neither pious nor necessary; nay, supposing they were lawful, yet they are not of any use. That they are not necessary, appears from hence; (1.) Because there is no Command for them either in the Old or New Testament; nay, in the Old Testament, where we read of many Sacrifices offered for all manner of Sins, yet no mention is made of any one offered for the Dead. (2.) We have no Instance of any such Prayers, whereas had they been necessary or useful, there were frequent occasions given for them, especially at the Death and Funeral Solemnities of Great Men. On the contrary, *David* who with Weeping and Fasting interceded with God for his sick Child, as soon as he was dead ceased praying for him; giving his reason for it in these excellent Words: *While the Child was yet alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the Child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.* (3.) Nor is there any Benefit arising from such Prayers, but they are wholly superfluous and vain. For nothing can be obtained by them for the Dead, neither for the Good nor for the Wicked, being both in such a State wherein our Prayers can be of no service to them.

The Act of
Judas
Maccabeus ac-
counted for.

To our second Argument the *Romanists* object the Example of *Judas Maccabeus* and the *Jews* in his Army, who pray'd and offer'd Sacrifices for them that perished in the Battel, 2 *Macc.* 12. 39, &c. *Answer.* (1.) We have in the first Book proved that Piece to be *Apocryphal*, and consequently no Argument can be deduced from thence to prove any Article of Faith. (2.) We ought to distinguish betwixt the Act of *Judas*, and the Judgment which his Historian passes upon it.

What *Judas* did seems commendable, and had nothing of Blame in it. For when things consecrated to Idols were found under the Garments of every one that was slain, a thing forbidden the *Jews* by the Law¹, it is said, *That every Man saw that this was the Cause wherefore they were slain.* *Judas* therefore, and they that were with him, remembering how God had punished the whole People of *Israel* for the like Offence committed by *Achan*², betook themselves to Prayer, and besought God that the Sin committed might wholly be put out of remembrance. Besides this, *Judas* exhorted the People to keep themselves from Sin; and they all sent two thousand Drachms of Silver to *Jerusalem* for a Sin-offering, not that the Dead should be absolved from their Sins, but that the Punishment of the Sin committed by those who fell in the Battel, might not affect them that survived. This matter of Fact, containing nothing in it contrary to the Law, the Historian does not seem to have rightly apprehended; but to have suppos'd that *Judas* offered Sacrifice for the Dead, that they might be absolved from their Sins. This his Mistake is palpable to every one that considers the whole Context, wherein they will see the Historian's Blunders in several other Particulars.

The *Things* for which we may petition God in our *Things to be* Prayers, are all that are conformable to the Divine *prayed for*. Will, *viz.* all such Blessings as he has promis'd and decreed to give. These we may with Assurance expect to receive, and may with Confidence pray for.

Now the Blessings of a Christian are of two sorts, *Spirituals* either *Spiritual* or *Temporal*. The former God has *more to be* promis'd to the Faithful that discharge their Duty, *pray'd for* without any farther Condition³: The latter he has *than Tem-* likewise promis'd, especially such things as are neces- *porals.* sary for the support of Life⁴; but only in general Terms, and not as our chief Good, but as an Addition to it. From hence 'tis plain, that *Spiritual Bless-*

¹ Deut. 7. 25, 26. ² Josh. 7. ³ Mat. 7. 11. Luk. 11. 13. John 14. 13. Jam. 1. 5. ⁴ Mat. 6. 33. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 13. 5, 6.

sings may in the first place be absolutely ask'd of God, as being certainly promis'd to us; and that we may likewise petition for *Temporal Good things*, but then with this Reserve (always included in those Promises) *provided they be not repugnant to our Salvation and the Decrees of God*. And this we should the rather do, because a secure and affluent Possession of the things of this Life, too often pinions us down to this Earth, renders us less fervent in our Love of Spirituals, and consequently emasculates the Mind, making it less capable of bearing up under Afflictions for the sake of Christ: at least it is inconsistent with that Virtue of *Patience*, the Ornament and Victory of our Christian Warfare, which is never more conspicuous than in Times of Adversity, and when we are called to bear the Cross for the Name of *Jesus*.

*The Sum of
the Lord's
Prayer.*

Whatever we ought to ask of God is summarily comprehended in the *Lord's Prayer*; whose Petitions do most of them relate to *Spiritual* things, and only One to the things of this Life; intimating that this should be our least concern, and not so often nor so ardently pray'd for as the others. For that Prayer consists of six Petitions, the three former of which have an immediate relation to the Glory of God; and that in this Order. The first respects the Words, Behaviour, and other outward Acts whereby God is honoured, [*Hallowed be thy Name.*] The second in these words [*Thy Kingdom come*] does properly concern our Hearts, whereby God may be honoured and esteem'd. The third [*Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven*] relates to those Deeds proceeding from the Heart, by which we obey and honour God. But here it must be noted that these are not empty Wishes, but Petitions properly so called, by which we pray to God to work all these things in us. The three last Petitions respect our own Welfare, which we beg likewise of God, since 'tis he alone that can grant them to us: and they proceed in this Order. First, we pray for a Blessing relating even to this Life [*Give us this Day our daily Bread.*] Secondly, for the averting of a Spiritual Evil, under which is included the obtaining its contrary, a Spiritual Good, viz. Justification, and the Gift of Eternal Life, [*Forgive us our
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[trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.]
And lastly, Preservation and Protection from a Spiritual Evil [*Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*]

There are several Questions commonly started on this Argument; as whether this Form of Prayer be always to be us'd? Or whether nothing else ought to be prayed for but what is either express'd or comprehended under the several Petitions of *the Lord's Prayer*? To both these we briefly reply, That it is not always necessary to use this Form, nor is it unlawful to ask for other things than what are contain'd in it; since we have the Example of Christ and his Apostles, who us'd other Forms, and pray'd for other things. But the greatest Query of all, and to which we think fit to give a full and satisfactory Answer, is, Whether it be lawful to use any Form of Prayer at all? Some do indeed maintain it to be unlawful, and cry up *Extemporary* Prayers, formed *extempore* and unpremeditatedly, according to our various Necessities and Occasions. As for our parts we say, that *Extemporary* Prayers, if a Man has the Gift to make them, are commendable, and proper to excite Devotion and Attention; since *Forms* of Prayer may not reach all Circumstances, nor take in all our Wants, especially such as are *Spiritual*, of which none but our own Hearts can be sensible. However, we are of Opinion that all *Forms* of Prayer are not to be condemned or rejected: since 'tis evident to every one who reads the Scripture that they are lawful, as appears from the Form prescribed by our Lord, from the *Form* of Blessing enjoin'd to the Priests under the Old Testament, and from the Practice of Holy Men, who in praying to and praising of God made use of *Forms*. Nay, 'tis very convenient to use some *Common Forms* in private, since all Men are not capable of making *Extemporary* Prayers, and some so ignorant as not to know how to express their Desires in suitable Words. But above all a *Form* is necessary in the *Publick Worship* of God, since

Queries answered.

* Acts I. 24. & 4. 24. John 17. Mat. 26. 39. and elsewhere. * Numb. 6. 24, 26, 27.

all,

all Men who can pray *extempore* in *private*, are not able to use such *extemporary* Prayers, as may recommend the Necessities, or raise the Affections of the whole Congregation. And let it be remembred by Those who are so much against *Forms* of Prayer in *publick*, that the *extemporary* Prayer of the Minister from his Pulpit, is a *Form* to the rest of the Congregation; since if they join with him (as 'tis presum'd every pious Hearer does) they cannot pray to God for any other Blessing, nor in any other Words than he that prays *extempore* does. True it is, God eyes the Affections of the Heart more than the Expressions of the Lips; and provided the Mind be sincere and devout, he does not stand nicely upon the exactness of the Terms wherein we pray to him: But still 'tis convenient even in our *private* Devotions to make use of such suitable Words, as may tend most to God's Glory, the setting forth of our Wants, and raising an Assurance of our being heard; lest hesitating in our Words, our Prayer be interrupted, and our Thoughts distracted.

III. Of the Disposition of him that prays.

3. The Qualifications necessary for him that prays.

As to the *Disposition* of him that prays, there are several things required duly to qualify him for the performance of his Duty: As (1.) *Piety*; that he who prays be pure in Heart, and square his Actions according to the Divine Commands; else he will pray in vain, and God will not hearken to him'. (2.) *Charity* towards our Neighbour, whereby we are willing to beg his Pardon if we have wrong'd him, or to forgive him if he has done any Injury to us. This Qualification is abundantly evinc'd to be necessary by Scripture¹, and particularly by the Parable of the cruel and merciless Servant². (3.) *Faith*; not only a general one in *Jesus Christ*, which is the Parent of *Piety*, but that particular one, which is an Assurance of being heard, and of receiving a gracious Answer³.

¹ 1 Joh. 3. 21, 22. Joh. 9. 31. Jam. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 8. 1 Pet. 3. 12. If. 1. 15. & 59. 1, 2. Lament. 3. 44. ² Mat. 5. 23, 24. Eph. 4. 31, 32. Coloss. 3. 12, 13, 14. Mat. 6. 12. ³ Mat. 18. 23, &c. ⁴ Jam. 1. 6, 7.

(4.) An *honest Intention*, petitioning for those things we ask to a good End, *viz.* the Glory of God, and promoting our own, and our Neighbours Salvation.

With respect to the first of these Qualifications, it may be asked, What must a Man do, who still lives in his Sins? *Answer.* Either he seriously repents of his Sins, or else he does not. If he does not repent, but is still fond of his Sins, he cannot expect to be heard by God; nay, to approach him with such a Temper of Mind, especially if the Man be fully convinced of the enormity of his Crimes, is desperate Madness; 'tis an Affront offered to the Divine Majesty, since 'tis an imploring of God such an Assistance, to which the Man declares himself to be a professed Enemy. But if he seriously repents of his Sins, he may pray to God, and tho he cannot expect to be heard with so great an Assurance, as if he had been constant in the Practice of Piety, yet he may so far depend upon God, that he will grant him whatever is necessary for his Salvation.

If it be asked with relation to *Faith*, the third Qualification mentioned, Whether it be requisite in every Prayer we put up, to believe that God will bestow upon us whatever we ask? To this I answer, that this is only required in those Prayers, whereby we ask of God those things that are necessary for our everlasting Salvation. As to the things that concern this Life, such a Faith is required as is conformable to the Divine Promises: That is, we are to ask them with a full Belief that God is both able and willing to bestow them upon us, provided it be for our good; and that if he does not grant them, he either withholds them, because he sees they would be prejudicial to our Eternal Welfare, or else because he will make us amends with a greater and more substantial Good.

IV. *Of the necessary Qualifications of Prayer.*

The *necessary Qualifications of Prayer* either relate to the Manner of praying, or to the Disposition and Temper of him who prays: and they are as follow;
(1.) *Humility and Modesty*, since by Prayer we speak to God, the Consideration of whose Divine Majesty, and of our own Sins, which have placed us at such a distance

Two Queries answered.

4. *Necessary Qualifications of Prayer.*

distance from God, ought to humble our Souls in his sight. Hence it is our Duty frequently in *Prayer* to confess our Sins to him, not always by a distinct Enumeration of them, that being only required when our Consciences groan under the Burden and Guilt of one or more Transgressions newly committed, and the Pardon of which we sue for; but by a general Acknowledgment, which may always put us in mind of our Unworthiness. (2.) *Ardency* and *Affection*, which requires that what we utter should come from the Heart: For what signifies that Prayer, where the Mouth speaks, whilst the Thoughts are taken up with other Objects? This Qualification ought to be urg'd the more, because Experience teaches us how often Men offend in this point, even whilst they lament and strive to correct their Wandrings in Prayer. Now this Distraction of Mind might in some measure be prevented, did Men but duly attend to, and correct the several Causes of it; which are a *fondness of this World* and the Enjoyments of it, crowding in upon our Thoughts and distracting our Devotions: *A forgetfulness or disregard of our own Wants*, which if duly considered might excite us to be more ardent in our Prayers: *A want of duly considering the greatness of the Blessings*, especially if *Spiritual*, that we ask: And lastly, *A Non-Attention to the Excellency of Prayer it self*. (3.) Another necessary Qualification for Prayer is *Affiduity* and *Constancy*, according to the Apostle's Injunction, *Pray without ceasing*¹; which Injunction may admit of a twofold meaning, *viz.* either that we ought to ask of God one and the same thing without Intermission, till we have obtained it, like the importunate Widow mentioned in the Gospel²; or else that we ought to pray very frequently, and accordingly have our Minds always disengaged, and in a frame fit for Prayer. (4.) *Brevity* is another Qualification of *Prayer*. We are to avoid all *vain Repetitions*³. Not that all long Prayers, and repeating the same Words with Fervency and Devotion, are here condemned, but only such a *vain Repetition*, whereby

¹ 1 Thess. 5. 17. ² Luk. 18. 1, &c. ³ Mat. 6. 3, &c.

we suppose that God will be moved to hear us for our much speaking one and the same thing over and over again. This was the Practice of the Heathens of old, and the known Usage of the Church of Rome at present, where Men mutter, and as it were tell out such a set Number of the same Prayers, according to the Tale prescribed by their *Rosary*; and hope to obtain the Grace of God by the bare recital of them, tho they neither attend to, nor understand what they say. But what an intolerable piece of Superstition and Popery is this?

V. *Of the Place and Time of Prayer, and particularly of the Lord's Day.*

The *Circumstantials* of Prayer are chiefly two, *5. The Circumstances* *Place and Time.* For the treating distinctly of which, *Prayers* are to be distinguished into *private* and *pub- of Prayer:* *lick.* As to *private*, whether alone or in the Family, they are not tied to any *Place*, but may be performed any where.

The *Place* for the *publick* Prayers of the whole *1. Place.* Church under the Old Testament was the *Temple*, according to the express Command of God, Deut. 12. 13, 14. *Take heed to thy self, that thou offer not thy Burnt-Offerings in every place that thou seest: But in the place which the Lord shall chuse in one of thy Tribes, there shalt thou offer thy Burnt-Offerings, and there shalt thou do all that I command thee.* Which is properly to be understood of the Prayers that were offered together with the Sacrifices. When the Children of *Israel* were fix'd in the promised Land, and *Solomon* had built a Temple to the Lord, there was the *Place* of Religious and Publick Worship fix'd. Hence it is that *Jeroboam*, who set up another publick place of Worship, is severely condemn'd, and charg'd with the Crime of *making Israel to sin.* But now under the *Christian* Dispensation, we are not confin'd to *Jerusalem*, or to Mount *Gerizim*, or to any other particular place of *publick* Prayer, but all Places are equally indifferent and acceptable to God, provided he is *worshipped in Spirit and in Truth.*

The Super-
stition of
some re-
proved.

Wherefore the *Romanists* Superstition is inexcusable, who fancy that the Prayers they make in *Churches*, consecrated by various Rites and Ceremonies, by Holy Water, Unctions, and sprinkling of Ashes, and Exorcisms, are more acceptable to God, than those that are made in a House or any other unconsecrated place. Nor on the other hand are those Men guilty of less Superstition, who suppose that *Popish* Churches, when fallen into *Protestants* hands, cannot be lawfully made use of for the Exercise of Religious Worship; since every thing being removed out of them that might incline us to Idolatry, they may very reasonably be applied to such a Use without the least Offence or Scandal given.

2. Time.

The other *Circumstance* of Prayer is the *Time*. And here 'tis to be noted, that some Prayers are made upon extraordinary Occasions, as in an eminent Danger or Misery that oppresses us, or when we are excited by a pious Motion to pray. Here *any Time* whatsoever is convenient, but all Ostentation must be avoided; and therefore we must pour out such Prayers *privately* in our own Closets, and not publicly, unless some apparent necessity forces us upon it. Other Prayers are *ordinary*, for which we appoint such and such stated Times; of which nature are our *Morning* and *Evening Devotions*, *Grace before* and *after Meat*, to which our own Wants and the Glory of God may sufficiently excite us.

Publick
Prayers
require a
set time
for Order
sake.

In our *publick Prayers* a greater strictness ought to be had, to avoid Confusion, and that all things in the Church may be done in Decency and Order. Thus in the *Jewish* Church they met every Sabbath to hear the Law of *Moses* read, with which Prayers were join'd, and they had three great Festivals in the Year, at which all the Males were commanded to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship. Beside these times, they had their stated Hours of Prayer: But now in the New Testament all Discrimination of Days is abolished, nor is any one Day more holy than another. Nor is there any one that now is fond of observing the Anniversary Feasts of the *Jews*.

However there still remains a Controversy, managed for several Years past with great Heat, about the Observa-

Observation of the *Seventh Day*. That the *Jewish Sabbath* is now abrogated, no Man can question that ^{the Obser-} believes the Scripture ^{vation of}. But the question is, whether we ^{the Sabbath} of this time are obliged to the observation of the seventh ^{was insti-} Day? There is another question previous to this, the So- ^{tuted from} lution of which will serve to illustrate the former, *viz.* ^{the begin-} Whether the observation of the *Seventh Day* was not in- ^{ning of the} stituted at the beginning of the World, since we read ^{World.} Gen. 2. 2, 3. *That on the seventh Day God ended his Work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh Day from all his Works which he had made, and God blessed the seventh Day and sanctified it.* For if the Observation thereof was instituted immediately after the Creation of the World, it seems to oblige not only the *Jews*, but all other Men besides, and consequently we at present are not discharg'd from the Obligation.

The Arguments for the contrary Opinion seem more ^{Arguments} solid to us, and we believe that here is a *Prolepsis* in ^{to the con-} these Words of *Moses*, such as is frequently to be ^{trary.} observ'd in his History. If it be urg'd, "That sup-
"posing such an *Anticipation* was to be understood,
"then it must be said, that God had rested many
"Ages after from his Work, since this Rest and the
"Sanctification of the Sabbath are joined together:"
To this we reply, That there is no Consequence in this way of arguing; for *Moses* would not be understood as if he meant that the Sanctification of the *Sabbath* had an immediate Connection with the Rest of God, but only by the by, in treating of the Creation, he, by way of *Anticipation*, is minded to insert, that God afterwards, when he sanctified the *Sabbath*, and prescribed the Observation of it to the *Israelites*, had a regard to the Rest, by which he ceas'd from his Works of Creation on the *Seventh Day*. There are several Arguments which may be produced for the support of this Explication. (1.) Because the hallowing of the Sabbath does not answer to the *Seventh Day* after the Creation, but after the giving of Manna; unless it could be proved that the seventh Day after the giving of Manna, was exactly the same with the seventh Day after the Creation, of which there is no

Revelation in Scripture. (2.) There would doubtless have some Footsteps remain'd of the Observation of this Day in the Acts of the Patriarchs, especially in the Travels of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, Worshipers of the true God; but we meet with no such thing in the sacred History. (3.) If the *Sabbath* of the *Seventh Day* had been prescribed to Men from the Beginning of the World, God would have reprov'd not only the *Jews*, but also the *Gentiles* for the neglect thereof, as he has reprov'd them for the Violation of his other Precepts.

An Objection
on answer-
ed.

On the contrary 'tis objected, " That the Apostle *Heb. 4. 3.* designing to shew that a *Spiritual Rest* was already prescribed, and was different from the *Jewish Sabbath*, and the Rest into which *Joshua* brought the *Israelites*, says that these Words [*As I have sworn in my Wrath, if they shall enter into my Rest*] were uttered by *David*, altho the Works of God were finished from the Foundation of the World, citing to this purpose *Gen. 2. 2, 3.* Therefore whilst the Apostle makes use of this Argument to prove, that the Promise of entering into Rest could not be understood of the *Sabbatical Rest*, because it was made when the Works of God were finished from the Foundation of the World, it follows that the Rest of the Sabbath-Day began at the Creation." *Ans.* The Apostle does not here speak of the *Sabbatical Rest*, but of the Rest in the Land of *Canaan*, where they should meet with an end of all their Troubles and Labours. Now by that Rest is shadowed out unto us our Eternal Rest in Heaven, into which the Faithful who die in the Lord shall enter, as is plain from the whole Context. And thus the Apostle's Argumentation hangs very well together; because *David* says, *As I have sworn in my Wrath, if they shall enter into my Rest*, even after the Works of God were finished from the Foundation of the World; it is plain that this cannot be understood of the Rest in the Land of *Canaan*, into which *Joshua* had already brought them, and into which some could not enter by reason of Unbelief; but it necessarily implies another Rest, into which the Faithful should enter, being reserved by God for them.

These

These things being premis'd, it is the more easy *The Pre-* to resolve the other Question, *viz.* Whether the Pre-cept concerning the Observation of the Sabbath be *Natural or Positive?* We say that the precise Observation of the Seventh Day is not of *Natural or Moral* Institution, and that for these Reasons: (1.) Because neither *Adam* in his State of Innocence, nor any other Man by mere Reason could tell, why they should rather cease from their Labour on the seventh than on any other Day in the Week: Nor could *Adam* have known that God rested on the Seventh Day, unless God had acquainted him therewith, much less that this Day was to be kept holy, without an express Command from Heaven. (2.) No reason can be assigned, why the Precept concerning the Time of Divine Worship should be more *Moral*, than that concerning the *Place*; but the latter is of *positive* Institution, and consequently the former is so too. (3.) If we take a more close View of the nature and circumstances of that Precept, with the Times and State of the *Israelites*, we shall find that this Precept only affected them, and that for the same Reason for which the other Ceremonial Laws were prescribed them, *viz.* That by the Observation thereof they might be withheld from the vain Idolatry of the *Gentiles*, and worship the God of *Israel* alone as the true God, who created Heaven and Earth. (4.) The outward Sabbath does not make a true *Jew*, nor a holy Man: for the Sabbaths of the Wicked, God is said to hate.

If it be asked, whether there is nothing *Moral* in *A Query* this Precept? To this we answer, that there is no *answered.* more *Morality* in the Precept relating to the *Time*, than there is in that which relates to the *Place* of Religious Worship. If there be any *Morality* in it, 'tis only this; That Nature teaches us not only that God is to be worshipped, but also that some special time must be set apart for such a Duty, whereby laying aside all our other Business, we may give up our selves wholly to the Worship of God. For Nature

tells us, that he who has bestowed all things upon us, ought to be worshipped; and that as we employ a suitable time on our Worldly Concerns and the things relating to the Body, so we ought to allow some Portion of our time on things that relate to the Soul and Religion: but whether the *Seventh Day*, rather than any other portion of time, ought to be set apart for that purpose, Nature has not determined.

An Objection answered.

But here it may be said, that the Observation of the *Seventh Day* in the Week is indeed *Ceremonial*, but the *Morality* consists in observing *every Seventh Day*: Hence it is that in the Christian Church the *first Day* of the Week is appointed to be kept holy instead of the *seventh*, in commemoration of our Lord's Resurrection from the Dead. *Ans.* (1.) The *Seventh Day* of the Week is expressly commanded to be kept holy, but that it might be changed to another Day, does not appear by the Precept; nay, the Reason added, *Because God rested on the Seventh Day*, is against such an Alteration, since this cannot be applied to any other Day. (2.) But what Proof is there that the first Day was instituted in the room of the seventh, and is now to be observed with the same strictness?

The Observation of the Lord's Day where in it consists.

As to the Observation then of the *Lord's Day* among *Christians*, it must be said, that this is founded not on any Divine Command, but on the Practice of the Church in all Ages down from the Apostles: So that tho' it be not of Divine Institution, yet since Reason teaches us that some time ought to be set apart, and Christians have made choice of this Day for Religious Worship: and since this has been the constant Practice, and back'd by publick Authority, a Man must be arriv'd to a great height of Presumption and Folly, who will not spend this Day in Religious Exercises, but oppose himself without any Reason against the concurrent Practice of all Christians. Now the Sanctification of the *Lord's Day* does not consist in a bare external Rest from bodily Labour, but in the Exercises of Piety, and of such things as are proper to excite us thereto, such as reading God's Word, hearing of Sermons, Religious Conferences, holy

holy Meditations, and especially commemorating the Divine Favours, whereby our Souls may be excited to a Love of Holiness. And that we may be at leisure for such Religious Exercises, a Rest from our worldly Concerns is requisite: Not indeed such a rigid Rest as was enjoined under the Law, but only that which excludes those Employments and Recreations, which are notorious Obstacles to a Man's serving of God either in private or publick. For 'tis confessed on all hands, that Works of *Necessity, Mercy and Piety*, may be perform'd on the *Lord's Day*, without any breach thereof. The true *Christian Sabbath* therefore is abstaining from Sin, and, as a Consequence thereof, entering into the Rest that remains to the People of God¹; and upon this account the Precept concerning the *Sabbath* is *Moral*, and of perpetual Duration.

VI. *Of the Effect of Prayer.*

The last thing to be consider'd by us, is the *Effect* of *Its Effect*. *Prayer, viz.* the being heard, by which the Faithful obtain what they desire of God in Prayer. Upon this account it is that many great Commendations are given to this Duty of Prayer, as that 'tis the Key of Heaven, the Ladder by which we ascend thither, with the like. There are many Promises made to it in Scripture², which is likewise full of Instances of the Faithful, who by Prayer have obtained the most difficult things.

But here it may be objected, that the Faithful do *An Object* not always obtain what they ask. *Ans.* From what *tion an-* has been said it appears that there may be several *swered.* Reasons assigned, why Prayers are not heard, either because the Man does not pray as he ought, or not conformably to the Divine Will. For it may happen, (1.) That he who prays is a Sinner. (2.) That he does not ask with Faith. (3.) That he prays for something that is evil or repugnant to the Divine Will. (4.) That he asks for that which is Good, to divert it to a bad End. (5.) That he requests something

¹ Heb. 4. 3, 4, &c. *This Mystical Sabbath is intimated*, If. 56. 2. & 58. 13, 14. ² Mat. 7. 7, &c. Luk. 11. 5, &c. Mat. 18. 19. Joh. 14. 13. 1 Joh. 3. 21, 22.

contrary to the Decree of God. (6.) Or which a greater Good hinders him from bestowing, viz. the Glory of God, or our Eternal Salvation. (7.) Or which God delays the giving, to try our Faith and Constancy. (8.) Or because he would have us pray often, without which he will not bestow it upon us. (9.) Or lastly, because he will give us greater Blessings than we ask of him.

S E C T. II.

Of Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving,

Thanksgiving, which is the second part of *Invocation*, is sometimes taken in a large Sense, to denote only the praising and celebrating of the Divine Name; sometimes more strictly, as it is a praising of God for some Mercy bestowed. So that there is this difference between *Praise* and *Thanksgiving*: the former relates to the Attributes of God, which are displayed in his Works; the latter has a regard to some Blessing for which we praise him.

For Divine Favours, both general and particular.

The things therefore for which we are properly to return God *Thanks* are Divine Mercies, whether bestowed upon our selves, or on others: For as we are commanded to pray and make Supplications, so likewise to give Thanks for all Men. First then, the Blessings which we enjoy in common with all Men, for which we are to return Thanks to God, are either Temporal, relating to the Body and this Life, such as Creation, Preservation, and the Government of Providence; or else Spiritual, relating to our Souls and a future State, such as the giving of Christ to be our Saviour, the Divine Vocation, and the Communication of the Holy Ghost. But besides these, there are, Secondly, several particular Mercies, such as happen to any particular Nation, or Family, or Person, for which we are bound to give Thanks.

Its Equity and Excellency.

Now what a greater Motive can there be to excite us to this Duty, than the Consideration of the *Equity* and *Excellency* thereof? (1.) It is highly reasonable: For since God has by his Mercies obliged us to devote our

our selves wholly to his Service, *Thanksgiving* is a sort of Return for the Favour we receive, which since it cannot be paid in Deed, we perform by Words. They therefore who omit this Duty, defraud God of that Right which by his Benefits he has obtained over us, obscure his Glory by not ascribing to him the Honour due unto his Name, and for the future stop the Current of his Mercies from streaming down to themselves. But, (2.) The very *Excellency* of this Duty ought to engage us to the performance of it; it being the noblest Worship of the Soul that we can possibly pay to God for all the Benefits we have received from him.

Thanksgiving is performed, (1.) By Words, by *By what* which we proclaim the Divine Mercies, and celebrate *Actions* the Glory and Attributes of God. (2.) By *Alms-giving*, thereby to testify how ready we are to imitate God, who has been so bountiful to us, in communicating part of his Benefactions to our poor and indigent Brethren. But (3.) and lastly, The greatest Sign of a grateful Mind is *Holiness of Life*; that being a Sacrifice with which God is most pleased, and by which he is most truly honoured, and without which all our Praise with our Lips is but empty Noise, and all our Alms but formal and hypocritical Pageantry.

It is the Property of *Thanksgiving*, that it be offered *With great lowliness of Mind.* with the greatest Lowliness of Mind; which appears by these two Acts: First, by an open Confession and Acknowledgment, that we are unworthy of the least Mercies we have received, and that God has bestow'd them *gratis* upon us without any the least Merit of our own. Secondly, By acknowledging and declaring that we cannot return Thanks worthy of the Benefits received, but that God's Mercies are greater than we can express, and more than we can tell how by the highest Gratitude to repay.

S E C T. III.

Of Oaths, or Swearing.

*Swearing
what.*

The third Part of *Invocation* is *Swearing*, which is a religious invoking of God, whereby we appeal to him the Searcher of Hearts, as a Witness of the Truth of what we affirm or promise, and as a Revenger if we take a false Oath; by which means we remove all manner of Doubt from the Minds of those with whom we have to do. God is therefore in every lawful Oath called upon, either expressly or implicitly; so that tho the Forms of Oaths may be various, yet they amount to one and the same thing, viz. *God is my Witness*, or, *Let him punish me if I tell a wilful Lye.*

*All sorts of
Swearing
not unlaw-
ful to a
Christian.*

But 'tis a question among some Christians at present, whether it be lawful to swear at all? And this Scruple they ground upon the Words of our Saviour, which seem to forbid all Oaths, Mat. 5. 34, &c. *Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, &c. But let your Communication be Yea, Yea, Nay, Nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of Evil:* a Text parallel to Jam. 5. 12. However if we mind these Words carefully, and consider exactly the Nature of an Oath, we shall perceive that our Saviour is far from pronouncing all manner of Oaths, taken upon what occasion soever, to be unlawful. For an Oath hath nothing in its own Nature that deserves to be prohibited; nay, it tends to the Glory of God, since he is thereby acknowledged to be Omniscient, and the Revenger of Perjury. Hence it is that God himself in the Old Testament not only makes use of Oaths, but hath also appointed an Oath for ending of all Strife'. But above all, we not only find it recorded expressly of an Angel, that *he lifted up his Hand to Heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever*²; but we read of St. Paul, the best Interpreter of our Saviour's Words, who

¹ Exod. 22. 11. Heb. 6. 16. ² Rev. 10. 5, 6.

very frequently makes use of an Oath in his Epistles'. So that upon the whole matter, the meaning of our Lord's Words is this; He hereby forbids all voluntary and unnecessary Oaths, which Men commonly use in their ordinary Discourse, and which the *Pharisees* look'd upon as lawful: And he likewise informs us that all those Forms of Swearing wherein the Name of God is not expressly mention'd, but only such things as have an immediate relation to him, are real Oaths and obligatory, contrary to what the *Pharisees* taught, who esteem'd no Oaths binding but such as were made in the express Name of God.

As for those who think no Oath to be lawful, some Men are so rigid as to esteem them the Pest and Nuisance of a Commonwealth, and such as are not to be born with: But we are not of that opinion, we rather think they ought to be tolerated as weak and erroneous Christians; and that for these Reasons: (1.) Because it is an Error only of the Understanding, which tends, as they suppose, to a greater Reverence of the Divine Being. (2.) Because they who believe an Oath to be lawful, yet do not urge it as necessary; and to abstain from things lawful, which lay no Obligation upon us, is no Sin. (3.) Because if an Oath had been absolutely necessary, it would have been expressly enjoin'd by our Saviour.

Of Oaths there are two sorts: *Affertory*, by which with the Name of God we affirm such or such a thing to be true; and *Promissory*, whereby we engage ourselves with an Oath to perform what we promise.

Oaths either Affertory or Promissory.

In all Oaths these Qualifications are requisite; (1.) An Intention of Swearing: If therefore any one through Imprudence, and not out of a vicious Habit, should utter such Words as contain an Oath, but without any Intention of Swearing, that Person cannot be said to have sworn. (2.) That it be done in the Name of God, since by an Oath he is honoured and call'd upon as a Witness and an Avenger of Perjury. It is not therefore lawful to swear by the Creatures, that being to appeal to them as Witnesses of Truth

Qualifications requisite in all Oaths.

1. Rom. 1. 9. Philip. 1. 18. 1. Thess. 2. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 23. and

and Revengers of Falshood, which is an Honour peculiar to God alone, the Searcher of Hearts. (3.) That it be done in clear and plain Words, without any double Meaning, whether of *Equivocation*, or *Mental Reservation*. (4.) That the Business, for the sake of which we take an Oath, be not every Trifle, but of weighty Consideration, and such as may bespeak the Necessity of an Oath.

In Promissory Oaths in particular. In *Promissory* Oaths these things are over and above requir'd : (1.) That the Person who swears be Master of himself, since if he is under the power of another (as Children under Age are) he cannot bind himself by an Oath to the performance of any thing. (2.) That it be of things lawful ; for if it be to do a Sin, it can be of no Obligation, since no Pretence whatsoever can be made for a Man's being obliged to a sinful Act. (3.) That it be not any Hindrance to a greater Vertue, for in such a case even a thing lawful in it self becomes unlawful. (4.) That it be not of a thing impossible ; or which being possible when the Oath was made, becomes afterwards impossible, tho not with our fault. These Conditions make an Oath lawful and obligatory.

The Effect of an Oath. The Effect of an Oath is the putting an end to all Strife, as the Apostle informs us *Heb. 6. 16.* And if the Words are so framed, as not to regard only God, but likewise Man, then its *Effect* is also the Right which a Man may claim from our Oaths as from a Promise. Hence arises a twofold Obligation of an Oath, one by which the Swearer is obliged to Man, the other by which he is obliged to God : So that if any Case should happen, wherein he who swears may seem to be absolved from his Obligation with respect to Man, yet with respect to God he cannot be discharged from his Oath. From this Remark 'tis easy to solve two Questions that are rais'd concerning the Obligation of Oaths. 1. *Whether an Oath obtained by Fraud be Obligatory ?* Answ. If the Deceit touch the very Essence of the thing contain'd in the Oath, then the Obligation ceases ; but not if it only affects the bare Circumstance thereof. Hence it was that the Oath made by *Joshua* and the *Israelites* to the *Gibeonites* was obligatory, tho there was a Trick used for the

the obtaining of it'. 2. *Whether an Oath be obligatory, that is extorted by Fear or Force, and such as is attended with a Prejudice to the Swearer*; as if one should swear to a High-way Man to pay him such a Sum for the saving of his Life? *Ans.* It is binding: For tho Force and Injustice may take away the Obligation with respect to him that imposes the Oath, yet the Obligation made to God remains in its full Force.

There are two sorts of Sins contrary to this Duty: *Offences against it,*
(1.) *Perjury*, when a Man attests by an Oath something to be true or certain, which he knows to be false or uncertain; or swears that he will do what he never intends to do. This is False-swearing, and a very heinous Crime, because God is called upon to bear witness to a Lye. And it is a very dreadful and accursed Sin, because he who swears, does by that very Act own a God, profess him to be Almighty, and an Inspector of Human Affairs, and yet calls down for his Vengeance upon him if he takes a false Oath. But there is another kind of *Perjury*, when a Man whilst he swears is fully resolved to perform his Oath; but afterwards altering his Mind, through Levity or Negligence, does not perform it. For a Man cannot be absolved from the Obligation of an Oath in the Eye of God, tho he should swear to his own Hindrance.

(2.) Another thing contrary to this Duty is *Rash Oaths*, utter'd voluntarily without any Necessity or apparent Advantage to the Swearer or any body else: Of this nature are all those Oaths us'd by Men of a light Behaviour in their common Discourse and Conversation. For such Oaths are a Derogation of the Divine Majesty, whilst the Name of God is profaned for every Trifle, and sometimes wicked Jest: This is to render that August Name vile in our Eyes, and is the ready Road to *Perjury* it self, since Men by habitual Swearing too often bring themselves into a Forgetfulness that they swear at all.

Helps against *Rash* and *Customary Oaths*, are such *Helps against Rash Swearing.*
as these: (1.) That we should not only refrain from all Swearing, but even from any solemn Asseveration,

when there is no Necessity for it. (2.) That we look not upon it as a thing indifferent, but as a very heinous Sin, which our Saviour has declared to proceed *from Evil, or from the Evil One*, and consequently cannot under any pretence whatsoever be lawful. (3.) That we often reflect upon the Divine Majesty, and how great a Reverence a Creature ought to bear to it. (4.) That if these Helps cannot break off a Custom of Swearing, then we should lay a Fine upon our selves for every rash Oath we utter, to be given to the Poor: And in a short time that evil Habit would be corrected.

C H A P. XII.

Of Confession; or publickly owning of God, and of Christ.

*Confession,
its Necessi-
ty.*

THE third *External Act of Piety* is *Confession*, whereby we profess our inward Worship before Men. *Confession* then in this place is not a praising or celebrating of the Divine Name, as 'tis often taken in the Book of Psalms; that being (as we have already shewn) a part of Invocation: But it is an open and ingenuous Profession of God, as the Creator and Governour of the World, and of his Son Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of Mankind, in whom we ought to trust, and without whom there is no Salvation.

*Most excel-
lent when
made at the
hazard of
our Lives.*

But the most excellent Confession of God and of Christ, is that which is made before unbelieving and ungodly Men, at the hazard of our Lives and Estates. To confess Christ, when such a Confession is a step to Riches and Preferment, where Crowns and Scepters are its Reward, is no Virtue; since such a Confession may be pretended to by worldly Men and Enemies to Christ, upon the prospect of Temporal Advantages: But then is Confession ingenuous, and such as denominates thee a Confessor, which makes thee to be envied and hated by the World, exposes thee to the Scoffs and Contumelies of others, is a bar to thy Wealth and Preferment.

Preferment, and makes thy Life lie at stake. This is a certain Sign of sincere Piety, and unfeigned Love towards God and Christ Jesus, whereby we count all the Enjoyments of this World to be of infinitely less Value, than the Worship due to our Jesus, and the Glory laid up by him in Heaven for us.

If it be asked what we think of the *Confession of Several* some Doctrinal Points controverted among Christians *Queries* at present, whether such a Confession be as necessary *answer'd.* before those who dissent from us, as of our whole Religion before Infidels? To this we say, that some Men are indeed of this opinion, grounding it upon St. Peter's Words, *Be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a reason of the Hope that is in you.* But these Words do not seem to be understood of all Controversies relating to some particular Doctrines (since our *Opinion* of these is not our *Hope*) but of our Assent to the whole Doctrine of Christ, and to such Points without which there is no Salvation. But to give a more distinct Reply to the Question in debate, we say, (1.) That it is not lawful for us to profess that we believe what we do not believe; since we ought not to lye in any Case whatever, especially when the Honour of God is concern'd. (2.) That we are not always bound to profess what we believe before all manner of Persons, but the Circumstances of Times, Places and Persons must be considered, that the Truth may be spoken to the greatest Advantage of our Neighbour, and to the advancing of the Divine Glory, and without any hazard to our selves, so far as we can fairly and with a safe Conscience avoid it. (3.) Above all, the Nature of the Doctrines is to be considered: for either they are absolutely necessary to be believ'd in order to Salvation; or else are not absolutely necessary, but highly conducive thereto; or, lastly, are of little moment, and contribute but little to our Eternal Happiness. As to the first of these, we ought not to be ashamed to profess them at all times, and before all Persons: and with respect to the second, they are to be profess'd, if there is any Probability of promoting

the Truth by so doing, and no Dangers ought to deter us from it; but if we have no such prospect of it, we may conceal the Truth for some time, till a more favourable Opportunity offers. But as for the last sort of Doctrines, since they are not absolutely necessary, nor of any great use to Salvation, a higher degree of Prudence is requir'd. We must enquire into the Dispositions of those Men with whom we have to do, watch for fair Occasions, and consider every thing that may be of any moment, before we discover our Sentiments in an unnecessary Truth, which may occasion Contentions and Distractions of Thought; with Danger to our selves, and without any Advantage to others.

But you will ask, What ought to be done, if a Magistrate requires a *Confession* of the two last kinds of Doctrine, and by Questions desires to know our Opinion about them. *Answ.* Since in such a case we stand before a Magistrate, that the Secrets of our Conscience may be reveal'd, we ought to use that Prudence which is consistent with the Innocency of the Dove. This is certain, that we ought not to confess any thing that is contrary to the Dictates of our Conscience; and that a greater Respect is due to a Magistrate than to a private Person. It is therefore lawful, if no Benefit can be expected from our Confession, modestly to decline it, and to give our Reasons for so doing. But if the Magistrate should still insist upon it, the Truth must be own'd ingenuously, and the Event left to God.

Again it may be asked, What they must do who live in a Country where the *Romish Inquisition* prevails, and where Religious Worship is paid to the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*, which they look upon to be idolatrous? *Answ.* (1.) If it be by any means possible, and our Affairs will permit, it is the safest way not to live in such Places. (2.) But if this cannot conveniently be done, then the Conscience must not be defiled by any Act which it looks upon as idolatrous, nor ought we to do any thing which may give the least Umbrage that we consent to such an Act. 'Tis indeed lawful, as far as a good Conscience permits, to decline the Danger; but when we must ei-

ther

ther commit Idolatry, or be expos'd to Danger, we ought to sacrifice our Lives for the generous Profession of the Truth, rather than wound our Consciences by a base Denial of it.

But to all this it may be objected, that *Nicodemus* Objections and *Joseph of Arimathea* were secretly the Disciples of *Jesus*, and yet they observ'd the same Religious Worship with the Enemies of Christ. *Answ.* (1.) These did not adhere to any unlawful Rites, but to the Divine Law as promulgated by *Moses*: whilst the others engage in such unlawful Acts as are a Blemish to the Christian Religion. (2.) These did not approve, but on the contrary disapproved of the Actions of the Jews, since *Nicodemus* openly contradicted them¹, and *Joseph of Arimathea* is expressly said *not to have consented to their Counsel and Deed*²: whilst those who join in the idolatrous Worship of *Rome*, by that very Act do countenance and approve of the Idolatry. (3.) These testified their Love to their dead Master, by embalming and burying him in Spices: whilst those dissemble their Love, and dare not shew it. (4.) Nor can any Precedent be drawn from their not openly and generously professing themselves to be the Disciples of Christ, since for this they are expressly blamed³.

Again, 'tis commonly urged, That the Prophet *Elisha* permitted *Naaman the Syrian* to fall down before other Gods in the Temple of *Rimmon*, because of his Attendance upon his King; tho by the Miracle wrought upon him, he was brought over to acknowledg the one true God. *Answ.* This Passage is not rightly understood; for neither does *Naaman* desire, nor could *Elisha* grant him a Toleration to commit Idolatry. What therefore he requests is, that the Prophet would intercede for him to God to pardon what he had done in bowing himself in the House of *Rimmon*; not that he would allow him to do so for the future. That *Naaman's* Words ought to be taken concerning the Time past, admits of no dispute to those who consider what he peremptorily declares about the

¹ John 7. 50, 51.² Luk. 23. 51.³ John 12. 42, 43.

time to come: *Thy Servant* (says he) *will henceforth offer neither Burnt-Offering nor Sacrifice unto other Gods, but unto the Lord.* And if we take the Passage in this Sense (as 'tis highly reasonable to do) the Prophet might very well bid him *go in Peace.*

C H A P. XIII.

Of Obedience.

*Obedience,
its Rule
the Word
of God.*

*Its Quali-
fications.*

*Most ac-
ceptable to
God, whilst
Disobedi-
ence is
chiefly ha-
ted by him.*

THE fourth and last *External Act of Piety* is *Obedience*, a Vertue by which we perform the Will of God declared in his Precepts, with all submission and readiness of Mind, as heartily and as often as Occasion offers. The Rule of such an *Obedience* is the Word of God, which declares his Will, and to which all our Actions must be conformable.

The requisite Qualifications of *Obedience* are as follow: (1.) It must be *Universal*, reaching to all God's Commands without Exception, nay to those which seem contrary to our Reason; for provided we are sure 'tis a Divine Command, we must not stand to enquire into the Equity of it, but readily comply with it. (2.) That we set a greater value on the Commands of God than on those of Men, how great an Authority soever they may have over us. (3.) And consequently we must rather endure the greatest and sorest Afflictions from Men, and even renounce all the Enjoyments of this Life, than do any thing whereby our Obedience may be violated; nay, the more we suffer upon that account, the more commendable is our Obedience.

From hence 'tis evident, that this is a Vertue very acceptable to God, and which renders all our Duties and Service grateful to him: For thereby we declare that we own the Sovereignty of God over us, whose we are, and all that belongs to us. Because to obey, is to acknowledg another's Dominion over us, and to submit to all the Precepts coming from him who is our LORD, and who has an absolute Right over us.

On

On the contrary, no Sin is more odious in the sight of God than *Disobedience*, which is in Scripture stiled *Witchcraft* and *Idolatry*, and accordingly has been severely punish'd in this Life. For the Disobedient throw off all respect to the Divine Commands, make their own Will the Rule of their Actions, and will not have God to reign over them. Now how displeasing to God will such a Rebellion as this be? How ungrateful to a Being who is so jealous of his Honour, and will not share his Glory with any Competitors?

The *Adjuncts* of *Obedience*, are (1.) Readiness and *Its Ad-* Alacrity, that is a Zeal and earnest Desire of perform-*junts.* ing all the Commands of God which we already know, or shall hereafter be taught to be our Duty to do. (2.) Sincerity, whereby we heartily comply with the Divine Precepts.

The Means of attaining such an Obedience, are (1.) *Means of* A constant desire of persevering in the Faith, since *attaining* Obedience is the Effect thereof. (2.) A Heart that is *it.* not refractory, but easily inclined to hearken to the Precepts and Exhortations of God. (3.) An unwearyed endeavour to make a continual Progress in the Knowledge of the Divine Will, which lays down our Duty. (4.) A constant Exercise in those things, whereby we may be more and more excited to, and confirm'd in our Obedience.

The *Motives* whereby we may be stirred to *Obe-* *Motives to* *dience* are chiefly these: (1.) A Contemplation of the *ir.* Authority of God, who prescribes it to us, and of that Sovereign Power he has acquir'd over us by the right of Creation, Providence, Redemption, and innumerable other Benefits. (2.) A Consideration that the very end of God's bestowing his Blessings upon us was to excite us to Obedience. (3.) A constant Meditation of the Promises made to the Obedient, and the Threatnings denounced against the Disobedient.

1 Sam. 15. 23.

C H A P. XIV.

Of the Contraries to Piety.

*Contraries
to Piety.*

BEFORE we dismiss this Argument concerning *Piety* (our Duty to God) it will be convenient to add something concerning its *contrary Extremes*; which are chiefly two, viz. *Impiety*, and *Superstition*, both of them criminal in the *Defect*.

S E C T. I.

Of *Impiety* and *Idolatry*.

*Impiety
what.*

Impiety is a Vice, by which a Man has no Reverence for the Deity: And this they are guilty of, who either pay no Worship at all to God, or else do not worship him alone. The former of these are either *Archeists*, who deny the Being of God or a Providence; or else the *Profane*, who tho they do own in some measure a God and a Providence, yet do not worship him, but live as if there were no God in the World.

Idolatry.

As for those who worship God, but not him alone, their Sin is stil'd *Idolatry*, by which more Gods are either openly own'd than one, of which nature was the *Idolatry* of the *Gentiles*, and into which the *Israelites* before their *Babylonish* Captivity frequently fell; or else implicitly, such as is the Worship which the *Romanists* pay to Saints and Angels: but having refused this sufficiently when we treated of the *Object* of *Piety*, we shall now consider another sort of *Idolatry*.

*Image-
Worship
condemn'd.*

This is when God is worshipp'd by *Images*, from whence the Name of *Idolatry* is properly derived. Not that it is unlawful for a Christian to have Pictures and Images, since that is innocent and allowable; but the Crime consists in paying any Religious Worship to them. This is a Sin expressly forbidden by the
second

second Commandment of the Decalogue. So that to form to our selves any Representation of God, who is a Spirit, and cannot be represented under any shape whatsoever; or to make to ourselves the likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Water under the Earth, so as to fall down and worship them, is gross Idolatry, of which the *Gentiles* were notoriously guilty.

Now *Images* may be said to be worshipped, either *Both directly* (1.) *Directly*, when a Man addresseth his Prayers to *and indirectly* those very Images, believing that they are endued *with some Divine Virtue*, which operates in them, and consequently that the Deity after a special manner is present to them: And this is the highest Degree of Idolatry. Or else (2.) *Indirectly*, when a Man performs his Religious Worship *at, about, or before* them. This is likewise forbidden by God, when he charges us not to bow down before Idols. So that if any one should bow down himself *at or before* them, he may be said to adore and worship them, altho in his Mind he should abominate them, and openly declare that he does not esteem them as Gods.

From hence 'tis easy to determine what Judgment *An Image* ought to be pass'd on the Practice of the *Romanists*, *and an Idol* who not only form to themselves the *Images* of Saints, *the same thing* but even of God himself, nay, of the Ever-blessed Trinity; who bow down before them, uncover their Heads, kneel, pray, and make Vows to them; who undertake Pilgrimages for their sakes, deposite them in sacred Places, adorn them with costly Robes, lock them up in golden Shrines, carry them about in Processions, light up Tapers before them, &c. Now what is all this but *downright Idolatry*? And the Distinction they make between an *Idol* and an *Image* is a very foolish one, *viz.* that an Idol represents a thing that has no existence in Nature, or a fictitious God; but an Image the true God, and a thing that does exist; that only Idols are forbidden, but not Images. If this be not trifling, we know not what is. For whatsoever is formed to represent God as the Object of Worship, is an Idol; not only that which represents a thing that has no existence, or a fictitious Deity, but also that which represents a thing *actually*

actually existing, or the true God. This is plain from the two Instances of *Idols* mention'd in Scripture, the *Golden Calf* made in the Wilderness, and the *two Calves* of *Jeroboam*. Both the one and the other was made to represent the true God, yet are they called *Idols* and *strange Gods*, and they who worshipped them were expressly stil'd *Idolaters*.

The Image-Worship of the Papists Idolatrous. Of this nature is the *Idolatry* of the *Romanists*, which they pay to *Images*: for tho it be not so gross as the *Idolatry* of the *Gentiles*, who represented and worshipped either a Creature, or that which had no Being in the World; yet it cannot be wholly excus'd from that Crime. Nay, there are many things in the *Romanists* *Worship*, which bears some Analogy to the *Idolatry* of the *Gentiles*: Of which nature, among others, is their ascribing a miraculous Power and Virtue to their *Images*. Besides, that they are highly guilty of this Crime, appears from all those idle, but frequent Distinctions which they make, not only between the Degrees of the *Worship* it self, as that of *Doulia*, *Latria*, and *Hyperdoulia*; but also between the *Object* of Divine *Worship*. Add to this, what is most of all intolerable, that in their *Catechisms* they have ras'd out of the *Decalogue* the second Commandment, which forbids the worshipping of *Images*, lest the common People should see the foulness of a Crime, that is so manifestly prohibited.

S E C T. II.

Of Superstition.

Superstition, its several kinds.

The other Extreme of *Piety* is *Superstition*, which is taken, either for a vain and over-anxious Fear of the Deity, supposing him to be offended at what he really is not; and in this sense it is a particular Fault, that is properly oppos'd to the *Fear* of God: or else for a vain and foolish worshipping of God, of which the former is commonly the Cause; so that both these are usually consider'd as one and the same *Superstition*. There are two kinds of *Superstition* properly so call'd: (1.) A preposterous Devotion paid, and a too great Confidence put in some external Rites and Ceremo-

nies

nies, tho themselves good and commanded by God, and conducing to Piety, provided they were duly made use of. Of this nature was the Superstition of the *Jews* in strictly observing the external Ceremonies prescribed by God, whilst they neglected the Moral Law; and this their Practice was absolutely condemn'd by God *. (2.) A solicitous Observation of those things, which are neither expressly nor implicitly commanded by God, and such as have no reference to Vertue, *i. e.* either to the Duties prescribed by God, or dictated by right Reason; but which depend merely on the Opinion of Man, and wherein true *Piety* is made chiefly to consist.

Of this last kind were the various Traditions of the *Pharisees*, blam'd of old by our Saviour †; and under the same head may be reduc'd several Rites and Ceremonies us'd in the *Romish Church*, which were never instituted by God, tho received by them as Holy and Meritorious. Of these Rites some are Idolatrous, or tending to Idolatry; such as the worshipping of Saints and Images, of Relicks, the Cross, &c. And others are vain and superstitious, *viz.* Their Superstitious Building and Consecration of Churches, their Observations of Festivals, their distinction of Meats, their Pilgrimages, Rosaries, &c. All these Ceremonies are urg'd by the *Papists* not only as useful and necessary, but likewise as *Meritorious*: And they lay a greater stress upon them, than upon the observance of the Commands of God, which must needs lead Men into an unavoidable *Superstition*.

The Rites of the Romanists Idolatrous and Superstitious.

Now *Superstition* usually prevails over well-meaning Persons, and such as are inclin'd to Piety, tho of a weak Judgment: and hence it is that they who are disposed to be pious, but by reason of the weakness of their Judgment cannot discern Truth from Falshood, do easily fall into it. From this therefore it is plain, that tho some Men may think *Superstition* to be criminal in the *Excess*, as observing many things that are not commanded by God, yet 'tis (as we said) a Vice properly in the *Defect*; since being concerned about

* Isa. 1. 11, &c. & 58. 5, &c. Jer. 7. 4. Amos 5. 21, &c. Mic. 6. 6, 7, 8. † Mat. 15. & 23.

leffer matters, and amusing it self with the Outside and Appearance of Religion, it neglects the true and more substantial Worship of God.

S E C T. III.

Of Magick, Divination, Astrology, and Casting of Lots.

*Magick
what.*

Besides the former, there is another kind of *Superstition*, which is attended with *Impiety*, and holding Correspondence with the Devil; such as *Magick*, and *Divinations* of all sorts concerning secret and future Events. Now *Magick*, commonly called *Witchcraft*, is (1.) Either *Diabolical*, when a Man enters directly into Contract with the Devil, that by his Assistance he may know and do some strange and wonderful things. This is a most heinous Crime, being no less than revolting from God, robbing him of that Love, Confidence and Honour, which are his due, and bestowing them on his Arch-Enemy the Devil. (2.) Or else it is *Artificial*, when by the use of some Gestures, Words, Signs and Characters, any wonderful Works are wrought; such as curing Diseases, raising the Affections, &c. Now tho they who do these things, do not suppose them to be wrought by the Assistance of the Devil, yet if they would but consider the matter closely, they might be sufficiently informed, that they could not do such things without the Devil's Assistance.

Divination.

Near a-kin to *Magick* is *Divination*, a pretending to the Knowledge of future Events, which cannot be discovered by Human Skill, because they proceed from undetermined Causes, and such as have no certain connection with the things themselves. Let this Divination be by Dreams, or by the Observation of the Elements, or the Flight of Birds, or by the Inspection of the Entrails of dead Creatures, or by any other way whatsoever; it is both a wicked and a foolish Pretence. For since a Man may easily perceive that in those signs there is no sort of Power of revealing hidden things, he might as easily apprehend, that such a

Know-

Knowledge cannot be had, unless either by expressly invoking the Assistance of some Spirit of greater Knowledge than our selves; or else by the observing of such Signs and making use of such Rules, as none but a *Demon* could be the Author of. So that this *Divination* has the same *Impiety* with *Magick*, and is equally forbidden by God¹.

Of the same nature is *Astrology*, not that which *Astrology* consists in observing the course of the Stars, which is commonly call'd *Astronomy*, for this is of great use to the Publick; but that which is usually call'd *Judicial Astrology*, which not only foretels the Seasons from the various Position of the Stars, but from the Calculation of Mens Nativities pretends to predict all the Events of a Man's whole Life.

The Vanity of this will appear both from the Principles on which 'tis founded, and from Experience. First, its Principles are very vain and ridiculous: For what can be vainer than that manifold Distribution of the Stars, and attributing special Influences to every one of them, according to the Powers of the Animal, under whose Figure the Stars are plac'd by *Astronomers*, for the help of Memory only? What can be more idle than the Distribution of the Heaven into twelve Houses, each of which has its peculiar Influences? What more foolish than to assign a particular Influence and Operation to every single Planet over all sublunary things, and to determine the Manner of their Operation, from the various Aspects which the Planets bear to one another? Who does not perceive that all this is only the Invention of an idle and distemper'd Brain? But Secondly, *Experience* is a sufficient Proof of the Vanity of this Science; for how often have the most eminent Astologers been mistaken in their Predictions, foretelling things that never came to pass? And if at any time they have hit upon the right, it was more by Luck (as they say) than by any good Cunning.

But the worst thing of all in this Art is, that it is so calculated as to root all the Love of Religion out of the

¹ Deut. 8. 10, 11. Lev. 19. 31. & 20. 6.

Minds of Men; since, by ascribing all their Actions to such and such a Position of the Stars, it introduces Fate, and a natural Necessity of all Events, which by no means can be avoided. And that which is most impious of all is, that the *Astrologers* rely so much upon their own Art, as to ascribe whatever happens, nay, the most extraordinary and miraculous Works of God, to the influence of the Stars.

A false
Pretence
to Prophe-
cy.

To these may be added another sort of *Impiety*, viz. a false Boasting and Pretence to the Name of God, when any one gives out that he is a Prophet sent by God, tho God never sent him; and utters Prophecies as Divine, which really are not; but are either the Inventions of his own Brain, or the Suggestions of the Devil, whom God permits to impose on those who falsely assume to themselves the Divine Mission.

Casting of
Lots.

Lastly, we shall subjoin something concerning *casting of Lots*, which is an Action designed to discover or find out some secret or doubtful matter. This in its own nature is not unlawful, since God himself in the Old Testament instituted the casting of Lots; thus he would have the promised Land to be divided by Lot¹, by this the Goat to be offer'd was chosen², by this *Achan* was found guilty of Sacrilege³, *Jonathan* was taken⁴, the ministring Priests were elected⁵, and *Matthias* was numbred among the Apostles⁶.

The several
sorts
of it.

But to treat more distinctly concerning the *Casting of Lots*, it is requisite in the first place to consider the several sorts of it. First then, *Lots* with respect to their End are divided into, (1.) *Divisory*, by which a certain Proportion of the thing to be divided is allotted to any Persons. (2.) *Consultory*, by which Inquiry is made what ought to be done in any doubtful matter. And (3.) *Divinatory*, by which the Revelation of some future or secret thing is sought. Secondly, with respect to its Institution, it is (1.) Either *Divine*, appointed by God himself: Or (2.) *Human*, which Men make use of by Compact, for the removing any Controversy that is betwixt them. Or

¹ Deut. 1. 38. ² Lev. 16. 8. ³ Josh. 7. 14. ⁴ 1 Sam. 14. 41. ⁵ Luk. 1. 9. ⁶ Acts 1. 26.

(3.) *Diabolical*, made either by an exprefs or tacit Contract with the Devil.

Divine Lots, whether *Consultory* or *Divisory*, were *Divine* Holy, as the Event proved them to be, since they *Lots holy* were appointed by God himself.

Human Lots, whether *Consultory* or *Divisory*, are *Human* either appointed for the finding out of what is right; *Consultory* and these are wholly unlawful, because the Word of *Lots unlawful* God is the infallible Rule by which a Knowledge of the *Divine* Will is to be had: or else for the discovery of some hidden Truth that is past, or of some uncertain Event that is to come. And these likewise are unlawful, because they are an extraordinary means, which have no ordinary Rule to go by, and consequently cannot be made use of without the extraordinary Direction of God.

The *Divisory* Lots, which are made concerning the *Divisory* things of this Life, either by the Authority of Laws, *Lots lawful* or by the common Consent of the Parties concern'd, *ful* by which they oblige themselves to stand by what the Lot determines to be done, are lawful, and sometimes to be used as the most proper means to preserve Unity and Concord. But then these Cautions are necessary: (1.) That they be made by calling upon the Name of God. (2.) That other ordinary means be first used, and no better method of removing the Doubt can be found. (3.) That the Event be only expected from Divine Providence, and consequently all Tricks must be avoided. (4.) That no superstitious Words or Rites be used that are not appointed by God. (5.) That what the Lot determines be allowed of, as proceeding from God, that so an end may be put to all Strife.

But there are other kinds of *Casting of Lots*, about *Lots in* matters of less Moment, and such as are for Recrea- *Pastimes* tion, and refreshing our Spirits after the Fatigue of *not altogether unlawful* Business: Whether it be to know who shall be the Master of our Sports, or casting a Dice, either at random, or by Art, which Cast may be corrected. If it be asked with respect to these, whether they be lawful or not? To this we answer, that consider'd in their own nature without any Sins attending them (such as cursing at our bad, or rejoicing overmuch

much at our good Fortune) they are not altogether unlawful, since they are designed to unbend and recreate the Mind, and make us more fit for our ordinary business. Only here this Caution ought to take place, *viz.* that all our Recreations which depend upon Chance, do not eat up too much of our time, or be too expensive, so as to raise and excite our Passions.

*Diabolical
Lots un-
lawful.*

As to *Diabolical Lots*, of what kind soever, they are absolutely unlawful, and are such Divinations as we observ'd to be condemn'd by God; whether they are made by an express or implicit Contract with the Devil, or by any other Superstition whatsoever.

CH A P. XV.

Of our Duty to our Neighbour.

*Duties to
our Neigh-
bour.*

WE are now to treat of our Duty towards our Neighbour, which consists of two Branches, *Charity* and *Justice*, comprised in that one Saying, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Of these two we will discourse in the following Chapters; and in this, first of *Charity*, and secondly of *Hatred* towards our Neighbour.

S E C T. I.

Of Charity, a Duty towards our Neighbour.

*Charity its
various Ac-
ceptions
in Scrip-
ture.*

By CHARITY is meant that particular Vertue, whereby we are mov'd not only to ward off any Inconvenience that may happen to our Neighbour, but likewise to promote his Interest as far as possible, and even to give him those things, which by common Justice he cannot claim as his due. In Scripture it is taken in a twofold Sense: (1.) To denote a charitable Disposition and Habit of Mind, from which as from a Fountain all the Duties of Charity flow. (2.) To signify the outward Duties of Charity, as flowing from a benign and charitable Mind.

Having premised thus much, we shall for the more distinctly treating of this Duty of *Charity*, consider the se

these four Particulars. (1.) Its *Object*. (2.) Its *Offices*. (3.) Its *Rule*. And, (4.) Its *Necessity*.

The *Object* of our *Charity* is commonly expressed ^{1.} *Its Object* by the word *Neighbour*. But tho among the *Jews* ^{2.} *Its Offices* their Neighbours were only reckoned to be those of their own Nation; yet our Saviour has corrected this Mistake, and by his Parable of the *Good Samaritan*, and by his excellent Sermon on the Mount has taught us, That all Mankind, even our greatest Enemies, are the *Object* of our *Christian Charity*. However, 'tis to be allowed, that our *Charity* ought in the first and chief place to be extended to those, *who are of the Household of Faith, i. e.* to true Christians.

The *Offices* of *Charity* are chiefly two, *viz.* (1.) ^{2.} *Its Offices* Praying to God, not only to deliver our Neighbour ^{3.} *from the Evils with which he is oppressed, but likewise to grant him whatever Blessings either Spiritual or Temporal he stands in need of.* (2.) A procuring the same for him as far it is in our Power, which includes in it these Particulars: First, that we neither wish nor do any thing that may hurt his Body, good Name or Estate. Secondly, that we should desire, and as far as in us lies promote his Welfare. And, Thirdly, that we should rejoice in his Prosperity, and sympathize with him in his Adversity.

According to the various Necessities of our *Neighbour*, our *Offices* of *Charity* ought to be exercis'd and suited to his various Needs. If he wants things necessary for the support of Life, then *Charity* commands us to supply him out of our Substance; and if we have not wherewith to give, we must assist him by our Advice and Comfort. If he stands in need of Spiritual Blessings, we must freely impart to him of our own, and that according to the variety of his Wants. We must instruct the Ignorant, reclaim the Erroneous, support the weak in Faith, raise up and comfort the feeble-minded, and admonish and reprove with Meekness the sinful Soul. In short, we must become all things to all Men, *bear one anothers Burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ*.

¹ Gal. 6. 2.

Its Rule.

The Rule of *Charity* is twofold: (1.) The Love of our selves. And (2.) The Love of God and of Jesus Christ towards us.

1. The Love of our selves.

First, The Love of our selves is prescribed as the Rule of our Love to our Neighbour; *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, says our Saviour¹: And again, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, even so do to them*². Not that this last Text is so to be understood, as if we should perform to others, whatsoever we would have them do to us; as if, for instance, a Father was bound to honour and obey his Children, because he requires that of them: but that we should do to another, whatever we would have him do to us, were we in his place and circumstances. But here a just distinction ought to be observ'd between what is our *Duty*, and what is only *lawful*: That we should think our selves bound in Duty to do that to our Neighbour, which we think he owes to us in the like case; and that to be lawful for our Neighbour to expect from us, and for us to give him, which it is lawful for us to expect from him. But we must take care that we confound not what is *due*, with what is only *lawful*; nor *vice versâ*, what is only lawful, with what is our Duty to do. From hence it appears, that here we have an infallible Rule of our Love to our Neighbours: for as no Man can be ignorant, what he would have another do to himself, so neither can question what his Duty is towards another. Nor is the Equity of this our Duty less visible; for what can be more equitable than to do that to another, which we would have him do to us?

2. The Love of God and of Jesus Christ towards us.

But Secondly, the Love of God and of Jesus Christ towards us is likewise prescribed as the Rule of our *Charity* towards our Neighbour; and chiefly consists in these four Acts. (1.) That as God and Jesus Christ loved us whilst we were yet Sinners and at enmity with him, so should we also love our Enemies. (2.) That we should love those who are meaner than our selves, and from whom we can expect no Return to be made. (3.) That after the Example of God and

¹ Mat. 22. 39. ² Mat. 7. 12.

of Jesus Christ, we should freely and heartily forgive the Offences committed by others against our selves.

(4.) That after the Example of Christ, we should lay down our Lives for the Brethren. From this Rule of Divine Charity is very evidently infer'd both the Sincerity and Constancy of our Love: For God loves us sincerely, for our own good alone, and even unto the end. But this and the other Properties of *Christian Charity* are very elegantly described by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 13. to which Chapter we refer our Reader.

From what we before briefly hinted at, concerning the different Acceptation of the word *Charity*, and of the word *Neighbour* the Object thereof, it is easy to infer, that tho we are commanded to love our Neighbour as our selves, yet an equal Degree of Love in all Cases and to all Persons is not prescribed to us. With respect indeed to the Good we ought to pray for, there is no inequality, since we ought to desire that the chief Good, viz. Eternal Happiness, may be bestowed upon all Men as well as upon our selves, and to promote it for them as far as possible: But however there is some difference of Order in our Wishes, since we ought to desire it immediately for the Pious, but for the Impious upon their Faith and Repentance.

However, with respect to the *Affection*, and the *External Effects*, there is a great deal of difference in our *Charity*: Hence Love is usually distinguished into that of *Benevolence*, whereby we wish and do well to another, tho unlike our selves, and deserving the contrary; and into the Love of *Friendship*, whereby we desire to be join'd and united to any one that is like our selves, and do him a kindness as one that deserves it: For our Affection varies according to the different Foundation from which it arises; for either 'tis founded on an Opinion, that the Object to be beloved deserves our Love, as being the Friend of God, a just, pious and good Man; or else only on the Divine Command, which enjoins us to love all Men, tho we should be certain that this or that Man by reason of some Vice or other is unworthy of our Love. The former of these is a more intense, free, strong and constant Love, and expresses it self with a sort of Zeal and Fervency; but the latter is of an inferior degree, and to be exercised

exercised towards those, whom we cannot love in the former degree.

And the
Exercise
thereof.

With respect to the *Exercise* and *Effects* of Love, there is a disparity in the Frequency, Order and Extent thereof, according as the variety of Circumstances requires, and makes such or such an Act of *Charity* more or less necessary. We ought, for instance, to exert our Charity very frequently towards those, in whom there are more frequent occasions given us of expressing a true Love towards them. Order ought likewise to be observed, according to the greater or less worthiness of the Objects of our Charity: Thus good Men, and those who have been our Benefactors, ought to be beloved more than others. But there are some Circumstances which require this Order to be inverted; thus an extreme necessity ought to make us prefer a Man that is less worthy to one more worthy, that only labours under some common Calamity.

Love of
our Ene-
mies, who
are so,
either out
of Igno-
rance,

From hence we may gather what sort of Love is due to our *Enemies*, viz. a lower Degree of Love than that with which we love the Brethren, but withal sincere and unfeigned. And here 'tis to be noted, that as our Love varies with respect to more or less Familiarity which the Object has with us: So towards our Enemies it sometimes differs with respect to the Affection and the external Effects of *Charity*, as he more or less renders himself guilty in the sight of God by his Hatred towards us.

For first, some may be our Enemies out of *Ignorance*, who owe us ill Will, because they know not what manner of Persons we are, and so think we deserve their Enmity and Hatred: And this may proceed from several Causes. (1.) From the Cause of Religion, when they think that we have none, or else a wrong and perverse one, or lastly one that is contrary to the Religion they profess, and consequently that we are Enemies to God, and deserve the Hatred of all, especially good Men. (2.) From only a difference of some Opinions about the same Religion; for Men are commonly too much wedded to their own Notions, and too often despise and hate those who dissent from them. This is gross Ignorance, and less excusable than the former. (3.) From the espousing of any Cause,

which

which they think to be either too bad, or too trifling, to be contended for. (4.) When a Person without any reason goes over from one Party to another.

But secondly, others may be carried away by a sudden Passion, whether justly or unjustly rais'd; and may think, speak, and act ill towards us, by endeavouring to blast our Reputation, injure our Estates, or touch our Lives.

Lastly, others may be our Enemies out of pure Malice, who hate us heartily; and tho we deserve no such thing, but rather their Love, yet wish us Evil. This may proceed either from a mere Inclination to hurt us, without any prospect of doing themselves any kindness; or from the expectation of some private Advantage; or from the Consideration of some publick Tranquillity which they think will accrue thereby; or else for the sake of another that is their Friend.

However, to all these we owe, First an *Affection of Charity*, whereby we ought heartily to pray for them, that God wou'd be pleas'd to change their evil Disposition of Mind, give Knowledg to the Ignorant, a calmness of Temper to the Passionate, and Humanity to the Malicious; and that God would not withdraw the means of Conversion from them, nor deprive 'em of those things that are conducive to that end. Secondly, we owe them likewise the *Exercise and Effects* of Charity. For (1.) we must not blast their Reputation and good Name, even when we have an opportunity of so doing. (2.) We must not immediately believe any ill Report that may be rais'd of them. (3.) We must not hurt them in their Estates, when we lawfully might, tho they have been injurious to us, especially when only a Damage would be done to them, but no Advantage arise to us thereby. (4.) We must not injure them in their Health or Lives by way of Revenge, or for the gratifying of our own Humour. (5.) And lastly, if there be occasion, we must do them good, supply them in their Wants, assist them when in danger, and to the utmost of our Power

Or out of a sudden Passion.

Or out of Malice.

To all these we owe both an Affection and the Effects of Charity.

1 Cor. 13. 5. Ibid. ver. 7.

defend them in the Possession of their Reputation, Estates and Lives'.

Several
Queries
answered.

Concerning this Doctrine of *loving our Enemies*, several Queries may be rais'd, to which we shall give a short and plain Reply. First then, it may be ask'd, Whether it be lawful for us to vindicate our Reputation from the Calumnies of an Enemy? *Ans.* Yes, by all means; thus our Saviour and St. Paul vindicated themselves*: Nay, this may be done, tho it should reflect upon the Reputation of another, whom by an open and ingenuous Apology for our selves we manifestly prove to be guilty of Calumny. For our Love to our Enemy ought not to be extended so far, as to give the World occasion of suspecting that he has reason to be our Enemy: For by this means God is affronted, since Innocence and Justice would be oppress'd, and a Pattern set for others to imitate the same Wickedness of Defamation.

Again it may be ask'd, Whether it be lawful to call such an one a *Calumniator*? *Ans.* (1.) We ought not rashly to do this, since 'tis possible that he may have spoken against us out of Mistake, or Prejudice, or in a sudden Passion. (2.) 'Tis to be consider'd, with what sort of Temper we give him that hard Name: for it may be done in a Spirit of Revenge, and then 'tis notoriously unlawful; or else friendly and courteously with mild Words, shewing that it was a Calumny rais'd concerning us, and this is lawful. As to what is commonly urg'd, that our Saviour very frequently calls the Pharisees *Hypocrites*, nay, says that they are of the Devil*: And that St. Paul calls the Chief Priest a *whited Wall**; and the false Teachers, *Dogs, evil Workers, Concision**. To this we answer, (1.) They did this, not by way of Recrimination, but as Pastors and Masters, correcting the Vices of Sinners; whilst at other times they entreated, beseeched, and express'd the greatest gentleness towards them. (2.) They were fully convinced that they utter'd the Truth, and knew the Hearts of Sin-

* Mat. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 20. * John 18. 22, 23. Acts 26.
* John 8. 44. * Acts 23: 3. * Phil. 3. 2.

ners. (3.) They spake without any Prejudice or Passion, whilst we are too often carried away with Anger, as if the Cause were properly our own.

Another Question is, Whether it be lawful for a Man to defend his Goods, or to sue for them before a Judge, in order to recover them from an Enemy who is unjustly possess'd of them? *Ans.* By all means: For this is no Revenge or Hatred, tho it should be attended with some Detriment to our Enemy; provided we beware, (1.) That it be not done with any Intention of revenging the Injury offer'd. (2.) Or of getting back what is our due, when the Punishment that may be inflicted on our Enemy by the Judge, is greater than the loss of our Goods can amount to.

It may again be ask'd, What if another offer us an Injury, does not Charity require that we should not resist it? *Ans.* By no means: It only requires that we should not revenge the Injury that is offered; for a just and lawful Defence of our selves is not at all repugnant to Charity. We may then admonish him to forbear injuring us, we may use our utmost Endeavours to prevent him from doing us any harm; nay, we may resist his Assaults upon us, and sometimes by the Interposition of the Magistrate.

Lastly it may be ask'd, Whether it be lawful to kill him that assaults us, when there is no other way left of saving our selves? *Ans.* (1.) The very Law of Nature allows this, since in such a case the Law arms every Man in his own Defence. (2.) The Law of *Moses* seems to grant it, because it permits a Thief that came by Night to be killed. (3.) The Christian Religion does no where prescribe to us such a Degree of Charity, as to suffer our selves to be killed by him that assaults us: nor does it any where forbid a just Self-Defence, but only the revenging of Injuries.

The fourth and last Particular propounded to be treated of, is the Necessity of Charity, which contains the Motives exciting us thereto: And they are as follow. (1.) Love seems to be ingrafted in our very Nature by God, so that 'tis natural for us to love one another. (2.) The very Indigence of our Nature prompts us to this Duty; for no Man is self-sufficient, but we all stand in need of the Help and Assistance of others.

others. (3.) God hath made all Mankind of one Blood¹, and would have all Men upon that account to look upon and love one another as Brethren. (4.) We are regenerated by one and the same Word and Spirit to one and the same Hope of Salvation, that we might be the Sons of one Father, and Members of one and the same Mystical Body, viz. Jesus Christ². (5.) It is a Duty commanded us by our Saviour and his Apostles³. (6.) This Command is corroborated by the Example of the Love of God and of Jesus Christ towards us⁴. (7.) The Necessity thereof further appears from the Encomiums given to it in Scripture, it being called the Bond of Perfection, and fulfilling the whole Law⁵. (8.) 'Tis the Characteristical Mark, whereby our Saviour would have his Disciples to be distinguished from all other Men⁶. (9.) Without Charity to our Neighbour, we cannot be said to love God himself⁷. (10.) Without it all our other Qualifications, our Alms-giving, nay Martyrdom it self will avail us nothing in the sight of God⁸. (11.) And lastly, without it we cannot escape the just Judgment of God⁹.

S E C T. II.

Of Hatred.

*Hatred, its
Object.*

Hatred, as opposed to the Duty of Charity, signifies properly a Mind evilly affected towards another, and sometimes denotes the very Act of doing him an Injury. Its Object may be a Man, considered either, First, as one discharging his Duty, that is, as pious, and so esteem'd an Enemy to us on that account. This is a Diabolical Hatred, and tends to the destroying of an innocent Person who deserves no ill at our hands.

¹ Acts 17. 26. ² Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6. ³ John 15. 12. Rom. 13. 8. 1 Cor. 14. 1. Gal. 5. 13. ⁴ 1 John 3. 23. ⁵ 1 John 4. 11. & 3. 16. ⁶ Col. 3. 14. Mat. 7. 12. Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10. Gal. 5. 14. ⁷ John 13. 34, 35. ⁸ 1 John 4. 20, 21. ⁹ 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3. ¹⁰ 1 John 2. 9, 10, 11. & 3. 14, 15.

Or, Secondly, it may be a Man considered as not discharging his Duty; and this, (1.) One who is not an Enemy to us, but to God, such as the Wicked, those who embrace a false Religion, or those who are only erroneous. (2.) One who is our Enemy, that has really, or in our Opinion done us an Injury.

The Acts of *Hatred* are various, some more heinous *Its Acts.* than others. (1.) Not giving to and supplying our Neighbour with what he stands in need of with respect to his Soul or his Body. (2.) Endeavouring to hinder him all we can from enjoying these necessary things. (3.) The imprecating the contrary Evils upon him. (4.) The inflicting or causing to be inflicted on our Neighbour any Injury whatsoever. When Hatred is come to this Head, it shews it self by some external Actions, such as wounding and maiming the Body, or blasting the good Name, or depriving our Neighbour either by violence or fraud of his Estate. But the highest Degree of all is *Murder*, expressly forbidden by the sixth Commandment.

Whatever Allowances were given the *Jews* under *Not Lawful for a Christian to hate his own Enemies.* the Law to hate not only the Idolatrous, who were the Enemies of God, but also such as were their own Enemies; Christianity does not allow us to hate any Person whatsoever. It is not lawful for us Christians to hate those who are our own Enemies, since 'tis expressly forbidden by our Saviour, who charges us to beware of all kinds of Revenge, whether by the Person who is injur'd, or by the Magistrate's Authority. But for the clearer apprehending of this Point, 'tis to be noted, that Revenge may be exercised upon a double account, and for a twofold End. (1.) It may be for Correction and Example, tending to the Amendment of him who is punished, and to be a warning to others. In this case the Magistrate avenges the Injuries done to private Persons; but this kind of Revenge is neither repugnant to the Law of Christ, nor to Charity. For the Magistrate punishes with Compassion, and for the Welfare of the State, which could not subsist without such an Authoritative and Exemplary

Punishment. (2.) It may be only a private Revenge, when the Person injur'd, to gratify his Passion, or his Pleasure in seeing another suffer, retaliates the Injury by another; or else hurries him before a Magistrate to have his Revenge on him. Now both these are unlawful. The first, because 'tis a manifest Breach of Charity, which commands us to forgive and love our Enemies; and 'tis unjust, because the Man sets up for a Judge in his own Cause, of which, being blinded with self-Love, he cannot pass a righteous Judgment. The latter, because tho he offends not against Justice, since he leaves his Revenge to the Arbitration of an impartial Magistrate, yet is his Deed directly opposite to Charity, since he designs nothing else but the making his Neighbour suffer, and delighting himself therein.

A Query answered.

If it be ask'd, whether it be lawful for a Christian to demand Restitution, and that before a Magistrate? To this we answer in the Affirmative: Since (1.) Restitution is an Act of Justice, whereby Reparation is made for an Injustice done, and a Person is restored to his Right of which he was unjustly deprived. Now in this Case there is no Revenge, nor is it any Injury to another to regain from him what does not belong to him. (2.) It may be that I with my Wife and Children may be starv'd, unless my Right is restor'd to me; should not I therefore be very unjust to those of my own House, did I not demand Restitution?

Mat. 5. 40. explain'd.

To this Doctrine of Restitution it may be objected, that *Mat. 5. 40.* it is said, *If any Man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat, let him have thy Cloak also.* Answ. Our Saviour does not here treat of all manner of Restitution, but only of such as is attended with Revenge; for he seems to speak of such a violent taking away of a Coat, which is punish'd very severely by the Law, if any Action should be commenc'd upon it; not of him who desires to have the Matter determined by the Magistrate, and to maintain his Right by good and solid Arguments.

1 Cor. 6. Again it may be said, that the Apostle *1 Cor. 6. 1, &c. ex-plain'd.* &c. reproves the *Corinthians* for going to Law before the Magistrate. Answ. (1.) The Apostle forbids the Brethren

Brethren from going to Law before Unbelievers (as his Words plainly declare) who might from thence take an occasion of calumniating Christianity; for he allows that those Disputes might be made up by the Believers themselves. (2.) He does not here treat of all manner of Controversies, when both Parties do really believe that the Right is their own, and are willing to submit to the Determination of the Judg; but of Controversies about Injustice and Cheating.

As 'tis lawful to demand Restitution, in case what is our due be detain'd from us; so it is likewise lawful to demand Satisfaction for a Wound or a Maiming. We may not indeed require an Eye for an Eye, a Tooth for a Tooth, with the like, since this would be Revenge: But if the Person wounded or maimed be poor, then he may require, not only that the Charge of the Cure be defray'd, but likewise Satisfaction to be made for the time he has lost; tho this must be left to the Arbitration of honest and impartial Men.

As to the Enemies of God, they are either the Wicked, or those of a contrary Religion to what he has instituted, or only the Erroneous. As to the Wicked, tho we ought to abominate their Works, yet we may not by any means hate them, but use all means for their Conversion. They must be admonish'd, rebuk'd, and sharply reprov'd; and if they are incurable, then we must avoid Communion with them, that so they may be reclaim'd by Shame. However, great Prudence is to be us'd herein, lest from hating their Practices we carry our Hatred to their Persons. As for those who are of a different Religion, they are not to be hated, much less those who are tainted with some Error, who are commonly call'd Hereticks. Therefore, they who not only excommunicate, but persecute them, who not only confiscate their Estates, and banish them their Countries, but also think them worthy of some tormenting Death, are highly guilty of the Breach of Christian Charity in the sight of God. For now we are not under such a Dispensation, as the *Jews* were formerly; we are under the Gospel of Grace, and Members of a Church whose Character is not to persecute, but to suffer Persecution for Righteousness sake. Hence it is

*Not law-
ful for a
Christian to
hate the
Enemies of
God.*

that when our Saviour in his Travels thro the Regions of *Samaria*, was denied Entertainment in a certain Village of that Country, because he was going to *Jerusalem*; and when the two Disciples would have called down for Fire from Heaven upon the Place, he sharply reprov'd them, telling them, *Ye know not of what manner of Spirit you are*; that is, you know not under what Dispensation you are. For you are not under the Law which allowed of such a Revenge, but under the Gospel, which forbids such a Practice.

An Objection taken from Psal. 139. 21, 22. answered.

But to this it may be objected, that God hates those who are his Enemies, and that according to the Example of *David*, Psal. 139. 21, 22. (where he says, *Do not I hate them, O Lord, who hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them as mine Enemies*) we ought likewise to hate the Enemies and Haters of God. *Ans.* (1.) It cannot be proved that God hates the Erroneous, who are otherwise good Men, tho at present Persecutions are rais'd against such: Nay, forasmuch as these are very jealous of God's Glory, lead Lives suitable to the Divine Precepts, and are so strict Lovers of the Truth, that they would rather sacrifice their Lives in the defence of it, than act contrary to the Dictates of their Conscience, it must be supposed that they are very acceptable to God. (2.) Tho God should hate them, yet it is not lawful for us to do so, unless we were in his stead, and knew how, and when, and after what manner to exert our Hatred towards them.

Enmity, one Degree of Hatred.

There are two kinds of *Hatred*; the first is *Enmity*, which is an inveterate Degree thereof, seeking an occasion of doing our Neighbour an Injury. Which when 'tis mutual, is a Breach of the Peace; but when on one side only, is a Breach of Charity.

Envy, its heinousness.

But there is another sort of *Hatred* no less vile than the former, viz. *Envy*, or repining at another Man's Prosperity. Now, the heinousness of this appears, (1.) Because the envious Man does not properly seek for any thing for himself, but only grieves at another's good Fortune, which can do him no damage. (2.) If he envies another for the Good he enjoys, which

which he himself desires only to be Master of, this is a sort of Pride, and Ambition, and repugnant to that Charity, which is of a beneficent and communicative Nature. (3.) The Enjoyments which he envies are not Vertue, which is so excellent, and in a Man's own power, by the Grace of God assisting him, to obtain, as cannot be envied; but they are the Honour, Power, Riches, &c. of this World, which are transitory, frail and uncertain, and such as contribute nothing to Eternal Happiness; sometimes falling to the share of those who do, sometimes of those who do not deserve them. (4.) *Envy* has not the least Pretence for its Excuse. *Hatred* may seem sometimes to be reasonable, viz. towards a wicked and ungrateful Person, but *Envy* never. (5.) *Envy* is very grievous and troublesome to the Person that is possessed with it, since he macerates himself at the Prosperity of another. (6.) The Effects of it are very pernicious; for through *Envy* it was that *Cain* slew his Brother¹, through *Envy* it was that *Joseph's* Brethren sold him into *Egypt*²: And not to mention any more, through *Envy* it was that the *Jews* persecuted the Apostles, and especially *St. Paul*, for preaching the Gospel to the *Gentiles*.

The Helps to remedy this heinous Sin of *Envy* are *Helps* these: (1.) To consider the great Goodness of God, *against* who scatters his good things with an indifferent hand *Envy*. on all Mankind; and as he has designed all Men to be useful to one another, so he has bestowed greater Blessings on some, that they may impart them to others; so that to envy such, is to arraign the Divine Bounty. (2.) We ought to consider the Interest either of the whole Church, or State, or of Mankind in general, which we are all obliged in our several Capacities to promote; so that here is no occasion of *envying*, but rather of praising God for his Goodness, in raising up such excellent Instruments, as advance our Interest and Salvation.

¹ Gen. 4. ² Gen. 37.

C H A P. XVI.

Of the second general Duty to our Neighbour.

HAVING treated at large of *Charity*, a fundamental Duty towards our Neighbour, and its Opposite *Hatred*; we shall in this Chapter discourse of the other Branch of our Duty towards him, viz. *Justice*, with its contrary *Injustice*; which we shall dispatch in two Sections.

S E C T. V.

Of Justice to our Neighbour.

Justice or Righteousness, its various Acceptations. There are various Acceptations of the Word **JUSTICE**, or *Righteousness*: For (1.) Sometimes it denotes the whole of Religion, and in this sense it is taken *Mat. 5. 20.* and *John 3. 7.* (2.) Sometimes it signifies our whole Duty to our Neighbour. (3.) Sometimes that special Vertue which gives to every Man his due. (4.) But besides this, it sometimes denotes a Fidelity or Constancy in observing the Divine Precepts. And (5.) it signifies Beneficence.

Its Definition. We shall here consider it in the third Sense, as a Vertue distinct from *Charity*, which is usually thus defin'd: "**JUSTICE** is a constant Propension and Readiness of giving every Man what is his due.

Its Object. Its proper *Object* therefore are things External, of what kind soever, i. e. all things of which a Question may be rais'd, whether they are **THINE** or **MINE**. Now tho our Bodies and Reputation may fall under this Topick, yet the common *Object* of *Justice* are our Possessions, whether real or personal, whether of Money or Estate; for of these the Dispute of *Meum* and *Tuum* most properly lies. This Vertue therefore takes it for granted, that Men have some just Dominion over the things which they have gained to themselves

selves as their Property; for God who has given the Earth to Men for their Possession, has also granted to them a just Dominion over it.

But here a notable Question arises, *viz.* Whether *The good* this just Dominion over the Possessions of this World, *things of* belongs to all Men, or only to the *Elect*? Only to the *this World* *Elect*, say some of the *Contra-Remonstrants*, which they *justly pos-* ground upon this Principle: That *Adam* had a right *seised by* before his Fall to the whole World, tho by his Sin he *those who* and his Posterity in him forfeited that Right; but that *are not* in Christ it is restored to the *Elect*: As for the *Repro-* *bate*, they have nothing to do with that Right, being excluded from the Grace of Christ, and therefore they unjustly possess and usurp the good things of this World. Others among them judg more truly, *viz.* that the unbelieving and ungodly Men are of right subject to the Forfeiture of this Dominion, and have not that higher Title to it, which the Faithful in Christ have; yet since the Sentence of the Law is not as yet executed upon them, and some sort of Dominion over bodily things relating to this Life is by the order of Nature their due, therefore they may have a just and free use of such Temporal things. As for our parts we say, (1.) That since this Opinion is built on a ruinous Foundation, *viz.* the Doctrine of Absolute Election and Reprobation, which we have sufficiently refuted, the Superstructure must necessarily fall to the ground. (2.) That this Opinion is the Mother of all Sedition; for since 'tis easy for every one to fancy himself to be of the Number of the Elect, under this pretence he will be for turning others out of their Possessions as unjust Usurpers of them; and what a Confusion and Anarchy must needs ensue? (3.) That it is directly contrary to the Sacred Scripture and the Genius of Christianity; since it nowhere teaches us that our Saviour came to restore to the Faithful a right over the things of this Life. On the contrary it tells us of Christ, *that he had not where to lay his Head*; and he says of himself, *that his Kingdom was not of this World*^a: Nay, he com-

^a Luk. 9. 58. ^a John 18. 3.

mands his Disciples *not to lay up Treasures here upon Earth*¹, and foretels that the Cross and Affliction should attend his Followers². So that the Right to which the Faithful are restored by Christ, properly relates to Heavenly things.

1 Cor. 3.
22. explained.

To this they object, what the Apostle says 1 Cor. 3. 22. *All things are yours*. Answ. The meaning of the Apostle is quite different from what they urge his Words for, as appears by the Context: For no mention is made in the Verses before of the good things of this World, or of the just or unjust Possession of them. But St. Paul reproves those Diffensions and vain boastings of Wisdom that prevailed among the *Corin-thians*, shewing that all Human Wisdom was Foolishness in the sight of God. They were not then to boast in Men, as being the Disciples either of Paul or Apollos, and that for this Reason, *because all things are yours*, i. e. You are not for the sake of your Teachers, but your Teachers and all the Gifts granted them by God are for your sakes: Glory not therefore in Men, such as Paul, Apollos, Cephas, for they with all their Endowments ought to be serviceable to the bringing of you to God and Christ. As for the other Texts, viz. Rom. 4. 13. 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4 and Tit. 1. 15. which they urge to the same purpose, they are so far from proving what those Men would have them, that the only Answer we shall give to what they object from them, is to desire them to read over the Texts again, and consider them a little better.

1 The Titles
of Posses-
sion.

Taking it therefore for granted, that all Men in general have a lawful Dominion over the things of this World conceded to them by God, it likewise follows, that the things which Men have by lawful methods secured to themselves as their Property, may be possessed by a just Title. Now this Title may be acquired several ways. (1.) By a just Seizure, and lawful entering into the Possession of any thing. (2.) By right of Inheritance, when a Man succeeds another as Heir to his Estate, by the lawful Will of the Testator. (3.) By Donation, when a Man freely

¹ Mat. 6. 19. ² Mat. 10. 17, &c. Luk. 14. 26, 27.

grants to another any part, or the whole of his Estate.

(4.) By Wages, which is a Reward for some Service done. And (5.) By Contract, when one Man makes over his Estate to another by some Obligatory Act and Deed.

But it may not be amiss to enlarge a little on the first sort of Title we mentioned, *viz.* a just Seizure, and lawful entring into the Possession of any thing. Antiently the Earth was a Habitation common to all Men, without any distinction of Possessions; but upon the Increase of Mankind a certain Proportion fell to every Man, and all things were his who made the first Seizure: Unless God out of his special Favour was pleased expressly to bestow such or such a Portion on any particular Person, as he did the Land of *Canaan* on *Abraham* and his Posterity. Thus the first Division of Dominions was introduced, which was not only necessary, but also just. It was necessary, (1.) For the avoiding and preventing of all Contentions, that might every day have happened about the Property of Possessions. (2.) That all things might be better looked after, and receive greater Improvement when divided into Parts, which are too commonly neglected when they are held in common. It was just, because it was founded not only on Human, but also upon Divine Right; since tho God did not at first command the Distribution of things, yet upon the account of the Increase of Mankind, and the prevailing of Iniquity, he declares it to be necessary for the peaceable and quiet Administration of things. After the same manner do those Islands and uninhabited Parts of the Earth fall at present to their share, who are the first Discoverers of them, and make the first Settlement upon them.

Justice then is conversant about those external things, *Justice* over which a Man has a right by a just Title; and *consists in* it consists in Equality, being chiefly concern'd about *Equality*. the Proportion of more or less: For when there is any Contract made between two Persons, if an Equality be observed, 'tis impossible but that the one will have more, the other less assigned him than is his due. Now this Equality or Proportion is twofold: (1.) *Simple*, which lies between two Terms. And (2.) *Analogical*,

logical, which is a *Similitude of Ratio's*, as the Geometricians term it,

Justice either Distributive, Hence it is that Justice is commonly divided into Distributive and Commutative. *Distributive* is that which is concern'd in the distributing of publick Honours and Preferments; which observes an Analogical or Geometrical Proportion, distributing unequal things to unequal Persons, according to their Merit and Dignity.

Or Commutative, *Commutative* Justice is taken up in Contracts, and relates to the Goods of private Men. Herein a simple or arithmetical Proportion is observ'd, since it regards the Value of the Things, without any respect had to the Persons. But for the due Observance of Justice in Commutations and Contracts, it is not always necessary to make Retribution in the same Kind, Number and Quantity. For tho this be requisite in restoring of any thing committed to our charge, yet in the business of Commutation it cannot take place; since it very often happens, that either a Man cannot, or else 'tis to no purpose to repay a thing in the same kind. Therefore this simple Proportion and Retaliation is not required, unless a Compact or Obligation, or the Divine Law in some cases enjoin it. Commutative Justice then consists in this, that I pay to another the Price agreed upon for the things, of which by Contract he conveys to me the Property; or if 'tis agreed upon by both Parties, that Payment shall be made within such a certain time: for in such a case, the Promise, so long as the time of performing it is not elapsed, is instead of the thing it self.

Or Corrective. But if Payment be not made according to Contract, then 'tis Injustice, and a wrong done; tho even in this case there is room left for that sort of Justice which is called *Corrective*, whereby matters are adjusted, and he who offers the Injury makes a reasonable Compensation to the Person injured, by restoring to him what he has wrongfully detained, or by making him amends for the non-payment of what was promised in the prefixed time.

Equity, its Offices. Near a-kin to Justice is *Equity*, which is a Moderation us'd in requiring that which is strictly our due. For the Laws are general Rules, prescribing what is just

just considered in it self, without any other Circumstance : Now it may happen, that a Fact may be attended with such a Circumstance, which if the Legislator had foreseen, he would by no means have disallowed. Here it is then, that Equity takes place, it corrects and moderates the Rigour of the Law, not minding so much the Letter of it, as the Intention of the Legislator. Its Offices are these two : First, that when we require justly any thing of another, either upon our own or the publick account, we should not stand too rigidly upon our Terms of Right, especially when our Debtor is an honest but poor Man, and other Circumstances persuade us to recede a little from our Right. Secondly, that if any thing be demanded of us, which we cannot deny to be justly due, tho by some special Pretence of Law we might be able to defend our selves, yet we ought not to make use of such an Exception, but should voluntarily forgo our Right, if there are weighty Reasons, why we should not make use of the Law, which we could pretend to.

Having thus in the general explained the Nature of Justice, there are some Particulars relating thereto very necessary to be enquir'd into. And, first of all, since Justice (as we have shewn) consists in Equality or Proportion ; it may be asked, whether *Merchandizing* and *Trading*, which is buying a Commodity as cheap, and selling it as dear as we can, be not repugnant to Justice, and consequently unlawful? *Ans.* We do not look upon it to be unlawful or repugnant to Justice, provided it be restrained within its due Bounds. (1.) Because it is necessary to some People, who could not be furnished with the Necessaries of this Life, and consequently could not subsist without it. And (2.) because it is no where forbidden in Scripture.

But it may be said, that it is forbidden *Jam. 4. Objections* 13, &c. *Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a Year, and buy and sell, and get Gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the Morrow, &c. Ans.* Merchandizing is not here forbidden, but only Mens setting their Hearts too much upon their Gain ; who ascribing all things to their own Industry, and disregarding the Providence

dence of God which over-rules them and their Affairs, do so order their Business, as if it were in their own Power to give them Success, and they needed not the Divine Blessing and Assistance. Nor does the Gain, which arises from Trading, seem to be repugnant to the Equality or Proportion required in Justice, since the Price of things may be either advanced or sunk according to the Scarcity or Plenty of them. He therefore who buys a Commodity for a cheap Price in Countries where there is a plenty of it, and after he has brought it from thence with the hazard of his Life, sells it again in another Country, where is a scarcity of it, at a higher Price, commits nothing repugnant to Justice, since he buys and sells at the Market-price of the several Countries; and 'tis highly just that he should have some Recompence over and above, for the danger and loss he exposes himself to.

Again, 'tis objected, that by the means of Merchandizing several Commodities are brought over from Foreign Parts, which we had better be without, as being Incentives to Luxury and a dissolute way of living, and that there are several fraudulent methods us'd in Trading. *Ans^r.* We here ought to distinguish betwixt the Use and the Abuse of things. God, as a munificent Benefactor, has furnished out abundance of good things for the use of Men, which may be lawfully brought from Foreign Parts, and may as lawfully be used. If then these Favours of the Divine Bounty be abused, 'tis not the fault of the Merchant who supplies us with them, but the fault of those who make a wrong use of God's Creatures. We own indeed that no Fraud or Injustice ought to be in Merchandizing.

*Rules to
be observ'd
herein.*

But since Men, who are greedy of Gain, and who make haste to grow rich, are too apt to fall into this Vice; these Rules ought to be observ'd, in order to render Merchandize just, and consonant to the Laws of Christianity. (1.) Let not the Seller impose upon the Buyer, by putting into his hands damag'd Wares, which for want of Skill to discern betwixt good and bad Commodities, or because the Faults are indiscernible, the Buyer takes for good. (2.) Let not the Buyer cry down a Commodity, in order to get it at a cheaper rate, nor the Seller cry up the worth of it

in

in order to enhance the Price. (3.) The Seller must not cheat with false Weights or Measures, nor exchange the Goods sold, and put worse in their room. (4.) The Buyer must not take an advantage of the urgent necessity of him that sells, in order to get a Bargain below the Market-Price. (5.) The poorer sort ought to have a thing sold them at a cheaper rate than the Rich. (6.) Things absolutely necessary for the Support of Human Life, such as all sorts of Provisions, on which the Magistrate has settled a certain Price, ought to be sold according to that rate, nor can any Pretence, whatsoever justify any Man's selling Provisions above a stated Price. (7.) The Seller must not deduct any thing from the quantity of the Goods sold, nor strictly insist upon ready Payment, where the Person is poor, and it is not to be had; but a reasonable time must be allowed him for the Payment. On the other hand, he who buys must faithfully pay for it, and that readily, if the Seller be poor, without putting him off from time to time. In short, this Golden Rule, which takes in all the rest, ought strictly to be observed; *Never do that to another, which thou wouldst not have done to thy self.*

In the second place, it is asked concerning Usury, *Usury un-* Whether it be consistent with Justice, and lawful. *der what* For the more ample clearing up of this point, 'tis fit to *Terms* explain what is meant by *Usury*, which is commonly *lawful.* defin'd to be *Interest agreed upon for Money that is lent.* Some do believe this to be unlawful, and among Christians the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* do generally condemn it; tho the *Jesuits*, when overpower'd with Arguments on the other side, do allow of such a Practice, under some Restrictions, which amount to as much as a general Toleration of it. As for our parts, we think that *Usury* considered in it self is not unlawful, but rather highly reasonable; since 'tis but just that he who is a Gainer by the means and use of my Money, should give me a share in that Profit, which I might have made my self had I turn'd my Money that way. But then it becomes sinful, when *Use* or *Interest* is exacted from the Poor, to whom a small Sum is lent, not for the driving of a Trade or getting of Gain, but purely for the support of Life;

or when a greater Interest is demanded than is allowed by the Laws of the Land, and especially if *Interest upon Interest* be required, this being justly compared to *grinding a Man to Death*. In all these Instances Usury is unlawful and repugnant to Justice, Equity, and Christian Charity, tho otherwise in it self it is lawful.

Objections answered.

To this Doctrine several Objections may be made: As first, that God in several places of the Old Testament forbids the *Israelites* from taking of Usury; to which purpose they alledg *Exod. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36, 37. Deut. 23. 19, 20.* *Ans.* Whoever carefully looks into those Texts, will find they treat of Mony lent out to the Poor for their necessary Subsistence; and to exact Interest of such, we have already said to be unlawful.

Again 'tis urged, that our Saviour says, *Luk. 6. 35. Lend, hoping for nothing again.* *Ans.* (1.) Our Saviour here speaks of those who extort Mony from us by Force, not of those to whom we trust it upon any Contract or Agreement, for he expressly calls them *our Enemies*. The meaning therefore is, that we ought to be so far from Revenge, that we should rather give them the Mony freely, which they would extort from us by Force, tho we had nothing to hope for from thence. (2.) But supposing hereby is meant all manner of Lending, yet nothing can be infer'd from thence against what we have advanced: for what is lent is either to a poor or to a rich Man; if to a poor Man, then not only the Interest but also the Principal ought to be remitted, if he be not able to pay; if to a rich Man, then the meaning is, that tho he should prove ungrateful, yet lend him if he ask it of thee, *hoping for nothing*, i. e. tho thou canst not hope that he will do as much for thee. (3.) To these may be added a third Explication, very suitable to the Scope of the place; for in the Original it is, *μὴ δὲν ἀπελπίζοντες*, i. e. *despairing nothing*. Now the Verb *ἀπελπίζω* sometimes denotes, in the signification of the Conjugation *Hiphil* among the *Hebrews*, to make or cause any one to despair. By reading therefore *μὴ δὲν* with an *Apostrophè*, the meaning will be, *making no Man to despair*, i. e. shew your selves so kind,

kind, that you may cause no Man, not even your very Enemy, to despair of your Charity, if he should ask it. And this Interpretation suits very well with what is said, Mat. 5. 42. *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

Lastly, it may be objected, that Mony is a barren and unfruitful Commodity, and consequently Interest is of a monstrous Growth, and such as is repugnant to the very Nature of Mony. *Ans.* Mony is indeed barren with respect to its Substance, but not as to its Use. What Injustice then is it, if any one be obliged by Bond to give me share of the Gain which he gets by the use of my Mony? And if it be lawful to receive a yearly Rent for Houses and Lands that are lett out, why not for my Money, with which I could purchase all these, and which brings in as much Gain to the Person to whom I lend it, as the richest piece of Ground does to the Husbandman?

As for the Practice of those who are commonly stiled *Bankers* and *Pawn-brokers*, who upon a Pawn or a Pledg lend out Mony to all who come to them, without any distinction, whether Poor or Rich; tho it be not absolutely sinful, and the Poor themselves receive some benefit from it; yet it argues a very great decay of Christian Charity, which puts the Poor on such miserable Shifts for a bare Livelihood: And in some cases it becomes highly criminal. (1.) In that most, if not all of that Profession, propose to themselves, not so much the relieving of the Poor, as the enriching themselves by it. (2.) In that they receive Pawns from some Persons, without enquiring who they are, even from very poor People, who can by no means be without them; nay, sometimes from Thieves, who are prompted to follow that Trade, since they can so easily borrow Mony by leaving the Pledg behind them. (3.) In that they exact too much Interest, which eats up the Poor; and hence it is that the Magistrates have often restrain'd the Extortions of those greedy and grinding Oppressors. After all, it would be better, if the Governours thought fit, out of a publick Stock to supply the Poor with Mony, upon such a low Interest, as was enough to maintain the

Pawn-Broking, in what Cases criminal.

Expenſe they ſhould be at, in keeping of Houſes and Servants to that purpoſe.

S E C T. II.

Of Injuſtice.

*Injuſtice
either in-
jurious or
deſerting.*

Injuſtice is that whereby a Man denies to give another his due, and 'tis branch'd out into various kinds. For firſt, it either is *injurious*, in taking from another that which is *his*, which ariſes commonly from ſome other Vice, ſuch as Anger, Covetouſneſs, Ambition, with the like; or elſe 'tis *Deſerting*, when a Man will not defend another's Right as 'tis his Duty to do, or will not give him that which belongs to him.

*Committed
either by
Fraud or
Violence.*

Again, *Injuſtice* is done either by *Fraud* and *Deceit*, or elſe by open *Violence*, which laſt is *Robbery*, when Men by armed Force are deprived of what is their due. As to *Fraud* or *Deceit* (forbidden by St. Paul, 1 Theſſ. 4. 6. *Let no Man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter*) we reckoned ſeveral ſorts of it relating to Trade, ſuch as changing of Wares bought, a double Weight and Meaſure, with the like. To theſe may be added other kinds of *Deceit*: As for inſtance, if we have a Suit at Law with another, we may be guilty of *Injuſtice* and *Fraud*, by corrupting of Judges, and endeavouring by falſe Evidences to prove our own, and overthrow our Neighbour's Cauſe; or elſe by our Riches ſpinning out the Tryal, and wearying our poor Antagoniſt that is not able to bear the Charge. Under the ſame head may be ranged the bringing others into danger by forged Accuſations, and ſuborning falſe Witneſſes againſt them: and this either *Directly*, which was the caſe of *Potiphar's Wife* falſly accuſing *Joſeph*, and of *Jezebel's* ſetting up falſe Witneſſes againſt *Naboth*; or *Indirectly*, which may be done theſe ſeveral ways: (1.) By wreſting our Neighbour's Words to quite another's Senſe'. (2.) By relating part of his Fact, and ſtifling the reſt, and

⚡ Thus the falſe Witneſſes did to Jeſus, Mat. 26. 59, 60. eſpecially

especially such Circumstances, which if concealed, may render the Fact otherwise innocent, to be suspicious and criminal'. (3.) By accusing another of that which we know will take away his Life².

Injustice is committed either openly, when a Man *Various* does not dissemble nor conceal it; or else covertly, *ways of* under the pretence of Friendship: Thus *Absalom Injustice*, killed *Amnon*, *Joab Amasa*, and *Judas* betrayed his Master: Or, under a Form of Justice, as was the whole proceeding of *Jezebel* against *Naboth*¹: Or under the Mask of Religion; thus *Simeon* and *Levi* under the pretence of Circumcision destroyed the *Sichemites*⁴, and the *Pharisees* under the pretence of making long Prayers devour'd Widows Houses⁵.

There are several Causes of *Injustice*: (1.) *Covetousness*, or a craving after more, or the fear of losing what we have. The former the case of *Judas*⁶, the latter of *Demetrius*⁷. (2.) *Ambition*, which caused *Absalom* to rebel against his Father⁸, *Athalia* to kill all the Blood Royal⁹, and *Herod* to destroy the Children of *Bethlehem*¹⁰. (3.) *Pride*, which moved *Haman* against *Mordecai* and the *Jews*¹¹. (4.) A Desire of *Revenge*, the case of *Joseph's* Mistress¹². (5.) *Envy*, which moved *Cain* against his Brother¹³, and the *Jews* against our Saviour¹⁴.

Under the Head of *Injustice* we may very fairly *Theft, its* reckon *Theft*, which is an unjust, private and fraudulent taking another's movable Goods without the *several* Knowledge and Consent of the Owner. Now *Theft* is either *Simple*, which has no peculiar Circumstance to distinguish it from other sorts, and is commonly called *Petty Larceny*; or such as has the Aggravation of other Circumstances attending it, of which nature is *Kidnapping*, or stealing of a Man; *Sacrilege*, a

¹ Thus Doeg accused Ahimelech to Saul, 1 Sam. 22. 9, 10.

² By this means were the three Children cast into the Fiery Furnace, and Daniel into the Lions Den, Dan. 3. 12. & 6. 12, 13. ³ 2 Kings 21. 13. ⁴ Gen. 34. ⁵ Mat. 23. 14. ⁶ Mat. 25. 15, 16. ⁷ Acts 19. 25, 26. ⁸ 2 Sam. 15. ⁹ 2 Kings 11. ¹⁰ Mat. 2. ¹¹ Esther 3. ¹² Gen. 39. ¹³ Gen. 4. ¹⁴ Mat. 27. 18.

robbing of Churches of such things as are dedicated to God's Worship; *Embezzling*, or pilftring out of the Cash that is under one's Care; Stealing and driving away of Cattel; and lastly, breaking up of Houses, or *Burglary*.

Its Punishments.

As to the *Punishments of Theft*, there are several appointed by the Laws of Men, and *Burglary* is punished with Death. Of these we shall say nothing besides this: That it were to be wished Christians were not more severe than the Law of *Moses*, which no where appoints Death for Theft, but only a twofold, threefold, or fourfold Restitution, according to the Nature of the Crime. For since the Law of Christ is a Law of Charity, 'tis fit that Christians in all their Judicial Sentences should breathe forth nothing but Charity, and not outdo in Rigor the old Law, wherein God shewed himself to be a severe Judg. But this by the bye. The Divine Punishment is Exclusion from the Kingdom of God; for of *Thieves* 'tis said, that they *shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*.

Restitution wherein it takes place.

In all the forementioned Instances of Injustice, *Restitution* takes place, whereby the Injury is redressed, and the Man restored to the Possession of that which was unjustly taken from him. It is properly an Act of *Commutative Justice*, since Restitution ought to be made according to the Proportion of the thing that is due, not according to the Dignity of the Person. In a proper sense *Restitution* takes place in external things that relate to the Body, especially Possessions; but by way of *Analogy* it is extended to Internal and Spiritual things.

Its necessity.

Both Nature and Religion teach us the *Necessity of Restitution*. For the detaining of another's Goods against the Owner's Will, is not only *Theft*, but a persevering in that Sin; and so long as a Man continues in that state, he cannot expect any Remission. But if the Man who has done the wrong is not able to make Restitution, yet he must always have a Heart ready to do it, whenever 'tis in his power; for he does not truly repent of his Deed, who so much as in his

Mind detains what he came by unjustly.

From hence 'tis evident what ought to be restored, *What is to viz. the very Thing it self if it be to be had, and if be restored.* it is in his power, who has defrauded the other of it; otherwise the Price of the thing, if it be lost, or if it cannot be recovered by him, or if through his fault it has received any Damage.

Nor is it less manifest, Who it is that is obliged *Who is to the Duty of Restitution, viz. every one who has bound to it.* unjustly wronged his Neighbour, whether by Force, or Fraud, or any other inexcusable Fault. Also every one who has by his Counsel, Command, Assistance, or any other way, been an Accomplise in the other's Injustice. And lastly, every one who detains another's Goods that were unjustly taken away, tho he came by them honestly, and knew not whose they were.

From hence likewise it is evident, to whom *Resti- To whom to tution is to be made, viz. to the right Owner, if he be made.* be alive, and to be found; else to his lawful Heir. But if neither of these after our most diligent Enquiry can be found, then the *Restitution* ought to be made to God, *i. e.* the things to be restored ought to be devoted to the Service of God, or to the Use of the Poor; according to the noted Example of *Zacchæus, The one half of my Goods I give to the Poor, and if I have done any wrong to any Man, I restore fourfold*.

‘ Luk. 19. 8.

C H A P. XVII.

Of the particular Duties to our Neighbour,
comprised under the general one of CHARITY.

*Duties
comprised
under Cha-
rity.*

WE are to look upon CHARITY and JUSTICE (discour'd of at large already) as the two great and general Branches of our Duty to our Neighbour; each containing under them other particular Duties. We shall in the several Sections of this Chapter treat of those particular Duties that are derived from CHARITY.

These then are such as relate both to the *Spiritual* and *Temporal* Welfare of our Neighbour. With respect to *Spiritual* things, our Neighbour may be considered, either as doing his Duty, or at least well-disposed thereto, and here *Joy in the Holy Ghost* takes place; or else as neglecting his Duty, or a Sinner, and then *Brotherly Correction* is to be used. With respect to *Temporal* good things, *Behevolence* (to which we annex *Hospitality*) and *Peace-making* are to be used. The Vertue which obliges us to bestow something out of what we have to our Neighbour, is *Beneficence*: And that which regards him as our Enemy, or as one that has done us any wrong, is *Clemency*. Of each of these distinctly,

S E C T. I.

Of *Joy in the Holy Ghost*.

Joy in the Holy Ghost *Joy in the Holy Ghost* is that Vertue, whereby any one proceeds with Chearfulness and Alacrity in the course of a holy Life, so as others may rejoice at his Deeds, *i. e.* be incited to follow his Example, and so have reason to rejoice. It is called *Joy*, by a *Metonymy* of the Effect for the Cause, because it produces Joy in

in our Neighbour; and tho it may not always have that Effect, yet since it naturally tends thereto, it may very well deserve that Name. This Vertue the Apostle stiles *Joy*, and ranks it among the Fruits of the Spirit; and that it is to be understood as relating to our Neighbour, seems to be proved from the whole Catalogue of Vertues here mention'd by *St. Paul*, since 'tis placed among such as immediately regard our Neighbour. The same Joy is recommended in another place, where 'tis said, *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost* ².

The Offices of this Duty are chiefly two. The first *Its Offices*, is, not only by our Advice and Counsel, but chiefly *1. To shew* by the Exemplariness of a holy and strict Life, to *a good Ex-* shine as Lights before others, to shew them the way *ample to* to Salvation, and excite them to walk in it with Alacrity. For a Christian is not called by the Divine Grace to Faith in Christ, nor is he deliver'd from the Pollutions of Sin, for his own sake alone, or that he should only work out his own Salvation; but for the sake of others, before whom he is to shine as a Light in the World, according to the expresse Command of our Saviour and his Apostles ³. For Experience tells us that the holy Life of Christians is the most sure and ready way to convert Infidels, and to bring them over from being Enemies, to be the hearty Defenders of the Faith. Whereas on the contrary, nothing is a greater hindrance to the promoting of the Faith, than the profane and wicked Lives of its Professors; for from hence Men are easily induc'd to believe, that either the Christian Doctrine is not so holy as some pretend it to be, or else that the Professors are not heartily persuaded of the Truth of it. This Duty then is incumbent on all Christians alike, but more especially on such as are eminent for their Age, or Gifts, or Office; since Men are commonly inclined to follow those whom they look upon to be their *Super-* riors, and who are as it were set up in a higher place,

¹ Gal. 5. 22. ² Rom. 14. 17. ³ Mat. 5. 16. Phil. 2. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 12.

that they may by their Examples be the more conspicuous to others.

A Query answered.

But here it may be asked, Ought a Christian then to be the Proclaimer of his own Vertues to others, in order that they may take Example from thence?

Answ. As all Ostentation of good Works to be seen of Men is vicious, and a Bar to the Reward of our Father who is in Heaven¹; so likewise a needless proclaiming of them for the Praise of Men is unlawful and criminal: However, as 'tis the Duty of a Christian to walk in the Light, and by all his Actions to testify that he is the Disciple of Christ, and lives according to the Rule prescribed by him, that others may have occasion to glorify God and follow a vertuous Example; so it is likewise lawful for him sometimes to publish his Actions to others, not to gain any Praise to himself, but to excite others to imitate him. But here this Caution ought to be observ'd, that whether we are in a publick or private Station, we must use great Prudence and Modesty in divulging our good Deeds to others, and never do it, especially in a private Capacity, but when the Glory of God, the Good and Edification of our Neighbour do apparently require it.

2. To conform our selves in all things to our Neighbour.

The other Office of this Duty is, That in all our Actions, which may probably be taken notice of by our Neighbour, we conform and suit our selves to him as far as the Divine Precepts will permit; that so we, like *St. Paul*, becoming all things to all Men, may at least gain some². But this Conformity is most conspicuous, when a Believer for the sake of his weak Brother abstains from the use of things which are otherwise not unlawful, but indifferent, when he perceives that by using his Liberty he may be an Offence to his Brother.

Its Opposite, 1. In Defect or in the Excess. In the Defect, Grief or the Defect. Sorrow is criminal, which is a Vice whereby we

grieve another, *i. e.* whereby we do those things, which in their own nature tend to lead another into

¹ Mat. 6. 1, 2, &c. ² 1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, &c.

Sin, and thereby give him an occasion of being sorrowful. The most heinous Offence of this kind is when a Man by Command, Persuasion, or Gifts, seduceth another to commit a Sin. This is downright imitating the Devil, whose Property it is to tempt, sollicite or seduce Men to rebel against the Divine Command. But, there is another sort of Grief, viz. when a Man commits enormous Sins contrary to the most holy Laws of Christ: For these in their own nature tend either to the blaspheming of the Christian Profession, or to the encouraging of those who are not deeply grounded in Vertue, to be guilty of the same Enormities by such an Example. But above all, the Examples of our Superiors, who have any Authority over, or Relation to us (such as Magistrates, Ministers and Parents) have a great Influence over us, so that we are too often inclined to follow their Examples, especially when they are bent on the wrong side. However, we ought to distinguish this Grief or Sorrow from what a pious Man conceives at the Sins of another, who cannot but grieve to see Men by their Wickedness fling themselves headlong into Ruin and Destruction. Such a Grief Lot's was, whose righteous Soul was vexed from Day to Day in beholding the Wickedness of the *Sodomites*: And such was David's, who said of himself, *Rivers of Water run down mine Eyes, because they keep not thy Law*. For this is a commendable Vertue, a sign of Zeal for God's Honour, of extreme Indignation towards Sin, and of an ardent Desire of the Salvation of others.

That which is criminal in the *Excess*, is a Desire of being too complaisant to others, whereby a Man to ingratiate himself with them neglects his Duty to God. Of this kind are all those, who either do what ought not to be done, or omit what they ought to have done, from whence proceeds a Sin, or at least they thereby give others an occasion of sinning. Upon this account we may justly blame, (1.) Those Parents, Magistrates, Ministers and Masters, who discharge

2. In the
Excess.

† 2 Pet. 2. 8. † Psal. 119. 136.

not their Duty towards those that are under their care, by admonishing, commanding, and correcting them when they have done amiss. (2.) Those who by their Consent approve of a Sin that is committed by another; for such an Approbation is an undoubted sign, that they themselves, if they had the Opportunity, would have been partakers in the others Guilt. Besides, this renders Sinners the more harden'd, since they perceive their Sin to be approved of, and themselves applauded as if it had been a good Act. (3.) Those again are to blame, who tho they do not in express Words approve of the Sin of others, yet really do that which amounts to an Approbation, i.e. they connive at the Sin, and associate themselves with Sinners; not indeed to join with them in the Crime; but by their Connivance and Company, they give the Sinners an Incouragement to go on in their Wickedness. Of this nature are all those, who deserting the Professors of the Truth which they themselves approve of, and whom they know to be unjustly oppressed, do, upon the consideration of some worldly Advantage, associate with Persecutors. By this means they not only seem to approve of a Falshood and of an unjust Oppression, but likewise by forsaking the Cause of Religion, and joining with its Persecutors, they render them the more confident in their Oppressions.

S E C T. II.

Of Brotherly Correction or Reproof.

*Brotherly
Correction
its necessity.*

When our Neighbour has sinned, then *Brotherly Correction* is to be used, by which his Sin is reprov'd, and he is admonish'd to return to his Duty. This, tho a very ungrateful Office, yet is the greatest Instance of *Charity*. There are but few Men who can bear with being told of their Faults, and there are as few that think it their Duty to do it, especially when they are like to meet with Scorn and Contempt, if not with Hatred for their Good-Will. However, if we have any Concern for the Salvation of our Neighbour,

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our, if we would not have him hardened in Sin, we must not suffer him to go on in a sinful course, without giving him some seasonable Reproof and timely Warning, whatever Difficulties we may expose our selves to. But for a more distinct View of this great Duty of *Christian Reproof*, we shall enquire, (1.) To whom it must be applied. (2.) By whom. (3.) After what manner it must be applied. And (4.) How it ought to be received.

First, it ought chiefly to be applied to our Brethren ^{1. To whom} that fall into a Sin, of which they repent not, or else ^{it must be} who behave themselves disorderly; for they are ab-^{applied.} solutely our Neighbours, of whom we ought to take a more especial Care. But forasmuch as Christians at present are crumbled into various Sects and Parties, and the Persons of such a particular Church or Congregation call themselves *Brethren*, in exclusion of all others who dissent from their way: As our *Charity* ought to extend to all Men, so this particular Act of it, viz. *Reproof*, ought not to be confin'd to this or that Body of Christians of which we are Members; but we must be ready to offer it to all as it lies in our way, and if they will hearken to us. Now that this *Reproof* may be well grounded, these two things are requisite: (1.) That we have a sufficient and certain Proof that the Person whom we would reprove has been guilty of that which is morally evil; for a bare Suspicion will not do. (2.) That we have a Prospect of meeting with some Success; for to admonish one that is desperately wicked, and who laughs at all Reproof, is insignificant and to no purpose.

Secondly, this Duty of reproving others is incumbent ^{2. By} on all Christians, who are commanded by the Apostle ^{whom.} to *exhort one another daily, while it is called to day*. However it is chiefly incumbent on those, who either upon the account of their Office, or of their excellent Gifts, are more fit to discharge it with Success. But here this ought to be minded, that he who reproves another be himself free from the same or a more heinous Offence, else his Reproof will signify nothing, nay it

will fly back into the Face of the Reprover. However, such an one may reprove another with Success if he himself testify the Sincerity of his Repentance by an unfeign'd Amendment of Life; for in such a case his Reproofs and Exhortations to Conversion come back'd and enforc'd by his own Example.

3. *The Manner of doing it.*

Thirdly, the *Manner* of applying it is various. (1.) It ought to be founded on the Word of God, as the only Rule of our Lives and Manners. (2.) It ought to be tempered with a Christian Charity and Mildness of Expression, without aggravating the Sin or the Circumstances thereof, since this would put the Man upon the fret, and make him listless to all our Admonitions. Tho here in some cases, when the Sinner seems to be in a sort of *Spiritual Lethargy*, sharp and startling Expressions ought to be used to awaken him out of that deadly Slumber. (3.) It must be applied with Prudence, taking proper Seasons, and observing other Circumstances which may be most suitable to this purpose. We must not, for instance, reprove a Man when he is in a passion and out of humour, but stay till he is in a calmer Temper; private Sins must be reproved privately, and publick ones publickly: but even in this case we are to suit our Reproofs to the Dignity, Age, and other Circumstances of the Persons; above all we must take care never to reprove Parents before their Children, nor Princes before their Subjects, since such a publick Reproof would lessen their Authority. (4.) It must be done with Perseverance, that so at last our Neighbour may be the better for it. (5.) We are not to be afraid of any Danger, or of the Hatred of those who cannot bear with our Admonitions: Thus *Elijah* was not afraid of *Jezebel*, nor *St. John* of *Herod*, whom they boldly reproved.

4. *How to be received.*

Fourthly, it ought to be received: (1.) With the highest Charity, and Esteem, as being the wholesome Physick of our Souls, and proceeding from a sincere Love towards us. (2.) With Humility. (3.) With Fruits of Repentance.

Its contrary Vice.

The Vice opposite to this Vertue is almost the same with that which we said was contrary to *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, viz. A too great Complaisance to others

How others, whereby that we may not offend them, we
 connive at their Faults, as if the taking care of our
 Brother's Welfare did not belong to us.

S E C T. III.

Of Benevolence strictly taken, and particularly of Hospitality.

Benevolence, which relates to the temporal Good *Benevo-*
 of our Neighbour, is discernible either in his prospe- *lence, its*
 rous or adverse Fortune: in Prosperity we are to re- *Offices both*
 joice with them that rejoice, especially if this Joy *in Prosperi-*
 proceeds from any Spiritual Advantage that accrues to *ty and Ad-*
 our Neighbour. In Adversity, we are to sympathize *versity.*
 with him in his Misery, according to the Command of
 the Apostle, *Weep with them that weep*: And again,
Remember them that are in Bonds, as bound with them;
and them which suffer Adversity, as being your selves
also in the Body. But here those are only meant, who
 suffer for Righteousness sake, in which case the Duty
 of *Benevolence* is branch'd out into the following Par-
 ticulars. (1.) We ought to pour out our serious and
 ardent Prayers in the behalf of those who are afflicted.
 (2.) We ought to visit, comfort, and exhort them
 to persevere in the Faith. (3.) We ought to inter-
 cede for, and defend the Captive, that his Innocence,
 with the Justice and Truth of his Cause, may appear
 to all Men. (4.) We ought to express our charitable
 Affections not only by fruitless Words, but by real
 Deeds.

The *Motives* to excite us to this Duty are, (1.) *Motives*
 That Spiritual Bond, whereby as Members of the *to it.*
 same Body under one Head Christ Jesus we are uni-
 ted together, so that if *one Member suffer, all the*
Members suffer with it. (2.) The Misery of our
 Neighbour, which in some measure is relieved and
 eased by this Act of *Benevolence.* (3.) Our own In-
 terest, that so we may discern the Frailty of our
 Lives, and of all worldly things.

[Rom. 12. 15.] Heb. 13. 3.

Its Opposites.

Opposite or contrary to this Vertue are, (1.) *Insensibility* (if I may so term it) whereby a Man is no more moved than a Stone at the good or bad Fortune of his Neighbour, but has divested himself of all Humanity. (2.) *Envy*, whereby a Man grieves at the Prosperity of another; but of this we treated when we discoursed of *Charity* in general. (3.) *Ἐπαίρησις*, Rejoicing at the ill Fortune of others, which is a Token of a very wicked Mind.

Hospitality, its Object.

Under *Benevolence* we are to consider *Hospitality*, recommended to us both in the Old and New Testament. Of this Vertue we shall first enquire towards whom it is to be exercised, who in general Terms are called *Strangers*, and these may be either our Friends and Relations, of whom we expect the same Kindness again; but this does not fall under that Notion of *Hospitality* we now treat of: or else poor People, who through the Calamities of a War, or for some other great and weighty reason are forced to fly from their native Country: or lastly such as are *Strangers* for Religion's sake, who either travel for the propagating of Christianity, or are banished their own Homes for the Profession of the Truth. These last are chiefly the Object of this Vertue, but without excluding those, who are forced from their native Country by the chance of War, or any other sad Accident.

Its Offices.

The several Offices of *Hospitality* to Strangers, as a Christian Duty, are (1.) To give them Entertainment; thus *Abraham* and *Lot* entertained the Angels. (2.) To do all good Offices to them, which formerly were summarily comprehended under that of *walking of Feet*. (3.) To supply them with Necessaries. And (4.) to protect them against all Injuries.

Its Motives.

The *Motives* to this Vertue are, (1.) The common Lot of Human Nature, by the Inconstancy of which it may soon happen that we may stand in need of the *Hospitality* of others. (2.) By this means to rescue the Good and Righteous out of the hands of the Persecutors. (3.) Because several have entertained A

¹ Job 3. 32. Isa. 58. 7. Rom. 12. 13. Heb. 13.
² Gen. 18. & 19.

gels unawares'. (4.) Because it has the Promise of a great Reward².

The Vice contrary to this Vertue of *Hospitality* is *Its contra- Inhospitality*, which is directly repugnant to the Laws ^{ry Vice.} of Nations; of which there are several degrees. (1.) The Denial of Entertainment, and all the Offices of *Hospitality*. (2.) The prohibiting *Hospitality* by severe Edicts to such as are *Refugees* for Religion's sake. (3.) The infringing the Laws of *Hospitality*, either by betraying or robbing the Persons whom we entertain, or by doing any other Injury to them.

S E C T. IV.

Of Peace-Making.

To *Benevolence*, or wishing well to our Neigh- *Peace-ma-*
bour, may very well be refer'd the Duty of *Peace-king what-*
making; which prohibits us from doing any injury
to others, and commands us to do them all the good
we can.

Now *Peace* is a *Reciprocal* Duty, which at least *A Recipro-*
passes between two Parties, and consequently unless *cal Duty.*
both are agreed it cannot be obtain'd; or else between
those whose Affections were never divided; or lastly
between those, whose Minds through Enmity were
disjoined, but united again by *Peace*. Hence the Du-
ty of *Peace-making* may be either *Reciprocal*, when
both Parties do their utmost to procure it; or not
Reciprocal, when tho one Party does his Duty to
obtain *Peace*, yet the other stilly holds out.

But for a more distinct veiw of this Vertue, 'tis *It is two-*
to be considered either as it is concern'd about the *fold.*
things relating to *Civil* Life, which is a *Political* or
Civil Peace; or about things relating to Religion,
and then it is called a *Religious*, or *Christian*, or *Ec-*
clesiastical Peace.

As to the *Civil* or *Political Peace*, this is recom- *r. Civil.*
mended to us by the Apostle, *If it be possible, as much*

¹ Heb. 13. 2. ² Mat. 10. 40, 41, 42. Mat. 25. 36.

*as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men*¹; and again², *Follow Peace with all Men*. Now this *Peace* is maintained either between private Persons, or between Bodies and Societies of Men. Again, it is either between two distinct Communities, or Bodies Politick, such as Nations, Cities, &c. and then 'tis oppos'd to War; or else between the Members of one and the same publick Society, and then 'tis oppos'd to Dissensions and Factions. Lastly, with respect to the Perfection or Imperfection of the Degrees thereof, Peace either consists in an *External* Tranquillity, wherein every one quietly enjoys what is his own, tho their Minds are not united: or else *Internal*, which comprehends the sincere Agreement of the Mind.

*Two things
requisite.*

Two things are therefore requisite for the making up of this Vertue: First, a peaceable Disposition of Mind; and, Secondly, such Actions as tend to the procuring of Peace.

*A peaceable
Disposition.*

First, a peaceable Disposition of Mind is requisite; without which there can be no Peace but a pretended and external one, which in a short time will break out into Divisions and Dissensions. For the attaining of such a peaceable Disposition, these things are requisite: (1.) That Peace be our only aim, and not our own private Interest or Necessity; else when these Motives fail, the Peace will be broken: now such a Peace as this is properly no Peace, but considering the great Inconstancy of the things of this World it is very deceitful, no more than an external Tranquillity, or Cessation from Acts of Hostility. (2.) That we be heartily in love with Peace and Quietness, and consequently avoid and keep at a distance from those Vices that usually disturb it; such as Self-love, Covetousness, Ambition, a Spirit of Revenge, Envy, groundless Suspicions and Jealousies, with the like.

*Actions
tending to
Peace.*

Secondly, the Actions which tend to Peace are such as these. (1.) That we never do any Injury to another. (2.) That we endeavour to the utmost of our power to promote his Welfare, and so win his Affections by our good Offices. (3.) That we willingly bear our share in the publick Employments of

¹ Rom. 12. 18. ² Heb. 12. 14.

the State. (4.) That we endeavour by friendly Conferences, and all manner of Civility to gain upon the Affections of others. (5.) And lastly, that we patiently endure the common Inconveniences of this Life, which cannot be avoided, unless we would for ever abandon the Society of others.

But since, as we have already observ'd, *Peace* is a *Reciprocal Duty*, and such as takes place at least between two Persons, and consequently cannot be had without the consent of both Parties, it is not absolutely necessary that we should always be in possession of this Vertue, since it is not in our power; but we must perform all those things on our part which may tend to Peace. Hence the Apostle advises, *if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men*; thereby intimating that there may be some things which are capable of depriving us of this Blessing.

Now we may follow Peace either whilst it lasteth, *What is to* or after 'tis broken. In the first case 'tis our Duty, *be done be-* (1.) Not to break the Peace our selves, nor to give *fore and* another any occasion of violating it. (2.) Tho' ano- *after the* ther should on his part do all those things that tend to *Breach of* the breach of Peace, yet we ought not to be his Ene- *Peace.* my, tho' we have a just cause for so doing; but we should rather put the best Construction on the matter. In the latter case, either the Peace is broken by our own, or by another's fault. If by our own, 'tis our Duty to do whatever is requisite to make up a Reconciliation with our Neighbour, either by excusing the Fact, or begging pardon for the Offence, or making Reparation for the Injury. If it be our Neighbour's fault, upon the owning of his Error and begging pardon, we must not be stiff and implacable, but ready to forgive. But, should he not own his fault, yet 'tis our Duty to be of a placable Disposition, and upon occasion to win him by our good Offices, and always to be ready to renew the Peace.

The *Motives* to this Duty are, (1.) The Equity *Motives* thereof; for nothing more becomes Men, who are of *to it.* the same common Stock, and are Brethren, than Peace. (2.) The Necessity thereof, because God com-

¹ Gen. 9. 5. Acts 17. 26.

mands it¹; and its contrary, Diffension, is placed among the Works of the Flesh². (3.) Our own private Interest³; since without Peace our Lives would be both unquiet and uncomfortable. (4.) By Peace many Sins are avoided⁴, and we obtain the Favour and Blessing of God, who is frequently stiled the God of Peace⁵, as Christ is the Prince of Peace⁶.

2. Ecclesi-
astical
Peace.
Things re-
quisite
thereto.

The Ecclesiastical or Spiritual Peace is between the Members of the same Church, who profess the Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, and whom our Saviour has gathered into one Body. This is every where recommended to the Professors of Christianity, both by Christ, and his Apostles throughout the whole New Testament. But for the clearer understanding of this Duty, it will be proper to consider these two things: First, with whom this Peace is to be maintained; and, Secondly, in what Offices it consists.

2. With
whom to be
maintain-
ed.

The Persons with whom this Peace is to be maintained, are describ'd by the Apostle under this Character, viz. Those who call on the Lord out of a pure Heart⁷: wherein these two things are requisite, That they profess a saving Faith in Christ Jesus, and render their Lives and Actions conformable to the Rules of Faith. Not, that it is to be expected, that Men in this imperfect State can be free from all Error either in Faith or Practice; 'tis enough that they sincerely believe, and do what is absolutely necessary to Salvation, as reveal'd to them in the Holy Scripture; and that they be not erroneous in any fundamental Points, nor commit any gross, enormous, and wilful Sins.

2. Of what
Offices it
consists.

This Spiritual Peace, besides the Acts required in a Civil Peace, has these Offices: (1.) That all who agree in the necessary Fundamentals of the Faith should not mutually condemn one another, but look upon each other as Brethren in *Christ Jesus*, and as Heirs of the same Promises. (2.) That they all should unite in

¹ Mar. 9. 50. Rom. 12. 18. Heb. 12. 14. ² Gal. 5. 20. Jam. 3. 13, 14, &c. ³ Mat. 12. 25. Gal. 5. 15. ⁴ Ecclesi. 28. 10. ⁵ 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Thess. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20. ⁶ 1st. 9. 5. ⁷ 2 Tim. 2. 22.

one Body the Church, and unanimously concur in the doing whatever might tend to the preservation of the Union thereof, by meeting in the same Assemblies, joining in the publick Prayers, and testifying their Brotherly Communion in the Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Besides these Offices, it is requir'd in one who is a *Especially* Lover of Peace, if there should happen any Disagree- *in any Dis-* ment in the Church upon the account of any Doctri- *agreement* nal Point in Religion; that he himself give no occasion *upon the* of *Schism*; but to the utmost of his power should so *account of* behave himself, as that it may be avoided. To this *Doctrine.* purpose let him observe these three Rules: (1.) Let him not pass too rash a Judgment upon the Person who dissents from him, as if he were moved thereto for any other reason than Point of Conscience. (2.) Let him beware of multiplying Controversies, and taking that for the main point in Dispute, which is only adventitious. (3.) Let him not, when he charges the Opinion of another with Absurdities, confound them with the Opinion it self, nor ascribe such an Opinion to another, which he heartily detests.

Contrary to this Vertue in the *Defect* is *Discord*, *Its Oppo-* by which Mens Affections are alienated from one ano- *sition in the* ther. This is twofold, as well as *Peace* it self, viz. *Defect*, *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*. The several sorts of it are *Discord*. Quarrels, Contentions, Enmities, Wars, &c. where- by either the private or publick Peace is disturbed, and Men are set at variance with one another.

But more particularly that which is repugnant to the *Schism* Peace of the Church is *Schism*; when they who *what.* ought to live in Union and Concord, divide into Parties and Sects, and set up different and separate Congregations, and opposite ways of Worship. There may indeed be several Reasons to justify a Separation from a Church, such as the maintaining of Heresy, imposing Terms of Communion that are absolutely sinful, with the like: And this clears the *Protestant* Churches from the guilt of *Schism* in their separating from the *Romish* Church, with which they could not

Gal. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 1. 10. & 11. 18.

communicate without Sin, and without being partakers in its Superstitions and Idolatry. But a causeless Separation from any sound part of the Christian Catholick Church, with which a Man may communicate without Sin; and the setting up of distinct Congregations and ways of Worship in opposition thereto, is *downright Schism*, such as is repugnant to the Peace of the Church, and to that Spiritual Union which ought to be maintain'd between its Members. This is not to be attributed always to what is usually pretended, *viz.* a Love of Truth, and a Zeal for the Honour of God; but is usually owing either to the Pride and Avarice of the Ecclesiasticks, or to the Ambition of Politicians. But let the Cause of the unhappy differences be what it will, they are too visible and cannot be dissembled: We see not only *Protestants* divided from *Papists*, but one part of the *Reformed* from another; each side casting Reflections upon the other, and hating one another with a perfect Hatred. May the good God of Peace, and Christ the Prince of Peace, incline our Hearts to follow after the things that make for Peace, before it be too late, and they be hid from our Eyes.

Its Opposite in the Excess.

Contrary to this Vertue in the *Excess* is maintaining of Peace with those, with whom it ought not to be maintained. Of which nature are, (1.) Those who do not look upon the Scripture as the only Rule of their Faith; but either intirely reject it, as the Infidels; or the chief part of it, as the *Jews*; or add another more perfect, as the *Turks* pretend their *Alchoran* to be; or look upon it as inefficacious, as the Enthusiasts and Quakers; or as imperfect, to which the *Romanists* join their Traditions. (2.) They who maintain such Doctrines as are destructive to the Fundamentals of Salvation; or impose such as necessary to be believed, which are not determined to be such in the Holy Scriptures. (3.) They who are profane, and are either Idolatrous as the *Romanists*, or indulge themselves in the Works of the Flesh that are repugnant to Christianity.

S E C T. V.

Of Beneficence.

Beneficence is that Vertue proceeding from *Charity*, *Beneficence* which teaches us to supply the Wants of others out on whom of our own Abundance. From hence 'tis manifest in incumbent. the first place on whom this Duty is incumbent, viz. The Rich, who may contribute to the Necessities of their Neighbour out of their own superfluous Store: And those who get their living by the labour of their Hands, whose Duty it is to work industriously with their Hands, that they may have to give to him that needeth¹.

A second thing that offers it self to our Consideration, is the *Motives* which excite to this Duty, and they are as follow: (1.) Because it is a most excellent Duty, by which we chiefly resemble God. (2.) The Law of Humanity and Charity requires this at our hands: For what is more equitable and consonant to Human Nature, than to relieve the Necessities, and out of our Abundance to support the Life of another, that bears as much of the Image of God upon him as we our selves? (3.) God has expressly commanded it, that so if at any time we should be unmindful of common Humanity, he might oblige us to our Duty by the Authority of his Precepts². (4.) Without this Duty our Love to God cannot be sincere, and all our Religion is in vain. (5.) God has bestowed Riches upon us, not to be used by us as the absolute Proprietors, but as Stewards, who ought to distribute them to the Poor; and 'tis a kind of Theft to divert the Riches committed to our Trust to any other use, than the great Donor intended them. (6.) What we give to the Poor, we give not so much to them as to the Lord, who requires these things by the Poor at our hands. (7.) This is a Duty so acceptable to God, that he is ready to pardon Men their Unrighteousness and Sins

¹ Eph. 4. 28. ² Deut. 15. 7, &c. If. 58. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 18.

upon the account of it *. (8.) God will reward it very plenteously, partly in this Life †, but more liberally in the World to come ‡; whereas on the other hand he will severely punish the unmerciful §.

*Towards
whom to
be exerci-
sed, and in
what
order.*

Thirdly, the Persons to whom this Duty ought to be exercised, are the Poor and Indigent, of what Religion and Nation soever, as we are instructed by the Parable of the good Samaritan †; nay, our very Enemies ‡. But whereas 'tis impossible for us out of our Estates to supply the Wants of all the Poor, 'tis fit that some Method or Order should be observ'd in our Beneficence, and those ought chiefly to be relieved, who have the most pretensions to our Charity. This Method ought then to be observ'd, (1.) With respect to the Wants of others, the Poor and Indigent who are destitute of the Necessities of Life ought to be supplied before all others; for in such a case our Act of Charity admits of no delay, since their present and extreme necessity calls for our immediate Succour. (2.) With respect to the Morals of others, all other Circumstances considered being alike, they who excel in Vertue ought to be preferred to the Vicious, who abuse our Charity, and live idly because they depend upon it; for to deny such as these our Alms, is sometimes very convenient, that they may be excited to Frugality, and to work with their own Hands. (3.) With respect to particular Ties and Obligations, they who are related to us either in a Temporal or Spiritual Sense, ought to have a greater share in our Love and Charity, than Strangers, when their other Circumstances are the same.

*The mode
or manner
of exerci-
sing it.*

A fourth thing to be observ'd, is the Mode or Manner in which our Beneficence ought to be exercised. As (1.) The End ought to be good, not out of a desire of vain Glory, but for the Glory of God; not regarding so much our own Interest, as that of our Neighbour on whom we bestow our Charity. And herein we ought

* Dan. 4. 27. 1 Pet. 4. 8. † 2 Cor. 9. 6-7, 8, 9. Phil. 4. 18, 19. ‡ Mat. 5. 7. Luk. 12. 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 19. Heb. 6. 10. § Jam. 2. 13. Mat. 25. 31, &c. † Luk. 10. 2. Luk. 6. 30. Mat. 5. 42.

to consult the Reputation of our poor Brethren as far as possible, by assisting them privately, without the knowledge of others, that we may not bring them into Contempt. (2.) It ought to proceed from a sincere Love of God, and a Desire of advancing his Glory, as also from a real Affection of relieving our Neighbour; which is chiefly display'd by the chearfulness of our Hearts and Countenances, when we seem as chearful in giving, as the Poor are in receiving; and by our readiness to give, either without Delay upon being asked, or even preventing the Petitioner's Request.

But fifthly, the greatest difficulty lies about the *The measure* Quantity of what we are to give, viz. what measure *sure of it.* ought to be observed in our Liberality, that so we may know how much we ought to give in any case whatsoever. *Answ.* (1.) This general Rule always takes place, not to give sparingly, but liberally. (2.) In proportion to the Estate bestowed upon us by God, our Gifts of Charity ought to be more or less. (3.) In proportion to the Want of those whom we would relieve; the Necessaries of Life ought to be bestowed on all Men, but he who needs them most must have the greatest share in our Charity. (4.) We ought to lay out more in works of Charity, than in gratifying our Pleasures; if therefore, we are profuse in these, the more must we bestow upon the Poor. (5.) We ought to consider what Effects Christian Piety and Charity has in others, that so we may be excited to equal them, if not exactly, yet in proportion to our Estates when compar'd with theirs. (6.) And, lastly, Christian Prudence and Charity ought to be our Directors in the *Quantity* and *Quality* which we are to give.

Sixthly, when you have done a good turn to another, *Our Duty* (1.) Beware of suffering your self to be too highly commended for it, and rather own the poor *after a Benefit done.* Object deserved more than you gave him. (2.) As much as possible forget the Benefit you have done, and consequently make no brags of it before others, nor

1 2 Cor. 9. 6. 2 1 Cor. 16. 2.

put him in mind of it to whom you have done it, since that looks like upbraiding him for it. (3.) Never require any Return to be made, unless there be an urgent Necessity for it. (4.) Be more concerned for your not giving to one that is worthy, than at your giving to one that is unworthy.

Its Opposite in the Defect, Unmercifulness.

The Vice opposite to this Vertue in the *Defect* is commonly call'd *Covetousness*. But whereas that is of two sorts, one consisting in the scraping up, and the other in the hoarding of Riches; and the latter again is either, that whereby the covetous Man dares not to make use of his own Wealth, and denies himself Necessaries, or that by which he shuts up his Bowels of Compassion from his indigent Neighbour: 'Tis this last sort of Covetousness only that falls here under consideration, and which may properly be stiled *Unmercifulness*. This they are guilty of, who having this World's Goods, and seeing their Brother have need, do shut up their Bowels of Compassion from him. Of this nature are, (1.) Those Persons who when they can in *Deed*, do only in *Affection* assist their Neighbour; who at the hearing or relating the Misery of another, are by some Principle of Vertue mov'd to pity him, but then go no farther, nor actually relieve their Neighbour. (2.) Those who besides the bare Affection do apply some real help, but not that which is sufficient for the Relief of another, tho it lay in their power to have done it: Such, who by Words only of Commiseration endeavour to comfort their Neighbour, when they might have afforded him a speedy Assistance; or intercede in his behalf to others for that Relief which they themselves might have given: Or lastly, who cry up the Vertue of *Beneficence* very highly, whilst they themselves either are not touched with any sense of their Neighbour's Misery, or if they are affected therewith, put him off from time to time with fair Promises of Assistance, which they never perform. Of these Men it is truly said, *they say, but do not*.

In the Excess, Profuseness.

Opposite to *Beneficence* in the *Excess* is too great a Profuseness, made without any regard had to the Want, Manners, or Relation of our Neighbours to us, and without any consideration of our own Abilities. By this

this means That is too often thrown away upon the unworthy, which might more rightly have been bestowed upon those that better deserv'd it; and the Vices of some Men are fed, who abuse this Profuseness to Idleness and Vice.

S E C T. VI.

Of Clemency.

The Vertue which relates to our Neighbour con-*Clemency*. sidered as having done us an Injury, is *Clemency*, which consists in the moderating of Anger. But for the more distinct treating of this Vertue, 'tis proper to premise some things: First, concerning *Anger* and its *Causes*: And, Secondly, concerning its *Effects*, that so we may the more easily apprehend the Offices of *Clemency*.

Anger is an Affection or Passion by which we *Anger*. would drive away from us some Evil, and is of the nature of those Passions that are in themselves neither good nor bad; and is either the one or the other, according as the Object is to which it tends, and the Cause from which it proceeds. So that *Anger* against Sin, and an obstinate continuance in it, is just and allowable; for this tends not to the evil, but to the good of the Sinner, not so much to his Punishment, as to his Amendment. * Whereas *sinful Anger* is that which is conceived by a Man for some Injury offered to himself or his, either really, or else in his opinion only, and which tends to Revenge. Such was the Anger of *Simeon* and *Levi*¹, of *Saul* against *David*², and of *David* against *Nabal*³.

The Causes of this *vicious Anger* are, (1.) A *Pride Causes of of Heart*, proceeding from a too great and prepos- a *vicious* terous Self-Love, whereby a Man not only pursues *Anger*. those things that are grateful to him, but takes it amiss, if that Honour, which he thinks to be his due, be not

¹ Gen. 34. 21. & 49. 6. ² 1 Sam. 18. 8. ³ 1 Sam. 25. 32.

paid him, or if another be prefer'd before him. (2.) *Jealousy*, and a too nice Enquiry what others think or say of us; hence it is that we are angry with those who do not think well of us. (3.) *Credulity*, by which we give too easy an Ear to Calumnies and false Reports. (4.) A not duly attending to the common Infirmities of Human Life, wherein we are all subject to failings, but interpreting all things as if they proceeded from Malice. (5.) A soft, effeminate way of living, whereby we desire that every thing should be as we would have it, and if any thing cros our Humour, immediately are offended at it. As *Anger* proceeding from these Causes is vicious, so if it sticks long upon us, it degenerates into *Hatred*. Hence the Apostle, tho he permitted the *Christian Ephesians* to be angry, because the restraining of the first Motions raised in us upon the account of some sudden Injury is hardly in our power, yet he cautions them not to sin, nor to let the Sun go down upon their Wrath, i. e. that it should not be lasting, nor lodg in their Breasts for the space of one Night. To this he adds, *Neither give place to the Devil*, who is the Author of all Wickedness, and whose Genius those who are angry do easily imitate.

Its Effects. The Effects of Anger are, (1.) *Clamour*, which is as natural a sign of Anger, as Claps of Thunder are of the breaking of Clouds; and which expresses it self in jangling, quarrelling, and at last, when the Mind is warmed, in hot Disputes. (2.) *Detraction*, whereby the Reputation of another is wounded, Reproaches cast, and Falsities charged upon him, or his Words are wrested to a wrong Sense. (3.) *Revenge*, by which we repay like for like, or even inflict a greater Evil, than the Injury of him that has wronged us amounts to.

The Offices of Clemency.

All these Mischiefs are redressed by *Clemency*, which (1.) Preserves us from being inflam'd with Anger, by guarding our Minds against the Causes of it, and keeping us in a calmness and evenness of Temper. (2.) If we are once moved by *Anger*, then this Vertue re-

¹ Eph. 4. 26, 27.

strains it from being lasting, since it will not suffer the Sun to go down upon our Wrath. (3.) It keeps us from so much as meditating upon *Revenge*; so that whatever Allowances were made to the *Jews* under the Old Testament, yet we *Christians* are absolutely forbidden to be of a revengeful Spirit. Nay, the very Law of Nature in prescribing us *to do to others, as we would have them do to us*, teaches us a quite contrary Lesson: And the Examples of God and of Christ, in forgiving us our manifold Transgressions, ought to excite us to forgive others their slight Offences, especially considering that we cannot with any good grace pray for, nor with any hopes expect to obtain Remission of our Sins, unless we forgive our Neighbour the Trespases he has committed against us.

But here some, who seek for an Umbrage to *Revenge*, *An Objection answered.* object, that God pardons the Penitent, so are we ready to forgive others their Offences upon their Repentance. *Ans.* God has pardoned us in Christ these two ways: First, before Conversion, whilst we were yet Sinners, determining not to condemn us for past Offences, provided we repented of them; and hence proceeded that Mercy of his which leads us to Repentance, and bestows upon us sufficient Assistance for the perfecting thereof. Secondly, after Conversion, he pardons, blots out, and forgets our past Offences, as if they had never been committed, and by this means justifies us. In like manner 'tis highly reasonable that we should not only pardon the Penitent, but also such as do not acknowledg their Faults, nay, who persevere in them; only with this difference, that the former are to be look'd upon as Friends, as formerly, but the latter are by no means to be esteemed as such; however, we must not revenge our selves upon These, but exercise all the Acts of Benevolence towards them.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the particular Duties comprised under
JUSTICE.

THE particular Duties to our *Neighbour*, derived from the other general Branch, *viz.* JUSTICE; are (1.) *Candor*. (2.) *Veracity*. (3.) *Fidelity*. And (4.) *Gratitude*. Of these, in so many distinct Sections.

S E C T. I.

Of Candor or Plain-dealing.

Candor and *Veracity* are Vertues nearly related to each other; the former has an Influence over all the external Signs, whereby we express the Sentiments or Inclinations of our Minds to others, and the latter over our Words only.

Candor or Plain-dealing, its Offices.

Candor, Plain-dealing or Sincerity (call it by which Name you please) is that Vertue, whereby without the least Disguise or Dissimulation we open and express our Thoughts to others. Its Offices are these four: (1.) To beware either by our Countenance, Words or Gestures, of advancing any thing that is contrary to the true Sentiments of our Mind; or a pretending to a greater Piety and Vertue, or to a greater Love and Benevolence to our Neighbour, than is really in our Hearts. Repugnant to this is *Hypocrisy*, whereby a Man pretends to be and have, that which he is or has not; or dissembles what he really is and has. (2.) Another Office is, to acknowledg our Errors and Failings as soon as we are convinced of them, to amend our Faults and own the Truth. Contrary to this is *Obstinacy*, when a Man will not acknowledg and amend the one, nor profess the other. (3.) Upon occasion we ought to shew our Neighbour, that his Actions

Actions are not pleasing to us, and to admonish him very friendly of his Duty, tho we may meet with his Hatred for our good Will. Opposite to this is too great a Complaisance, or a Desire of humouring others in the neglect of those things that are necessary to their Edification and Salvation. (4.) The last Office of *Candor* is freely to acknowledg what is praise-worthy in others, tho they should not be so kind to us, nay tho they were our very Enemies. Opposite to this is that Temper, whereby a Man would lessen, and misinterpret all the laudable Actions of another, whom he looks upon to be his Enemy.

Opposite in the *Defect* to *Candor* or *Plain-Dealing* in the general is *Hypocrisy*, so often mentioned and condemned in Scripture; when a Man makes a greater Semblance of Piety towards God, or of Charity towards his Neighbour, than he knows in his own heart he is master of. Hence 'tis that some lay such a stress upon external Performances, and affectionate formal Wishes; as if God were to be pleased by the mere outside and shell of Devotion, or our Neighbour sufficiently warmed and fed, by mere wishing him to be so, tho they contribute nothing either to the one or to the other.

Its Opposite in the Defect, Hypocrisy.

Opposite to the Vertue of *Candor* in the *Excess* is too great a *Simplicity*, when a Man without any occasion, or any advantage proposed to himself or to his Neighbour, but rather to the detriment of both, opens his Mind too freely: For every thing is not to be spoken or revealed at all times, but a favourable Season and Opportunity ought to be waited for, that it may be done with the greater Success. But having treated of this in the 12th Chapter of this Book concerning *Confession*, we need not enlarge upon it here.

In the Excess, too great a Simplicity.

As to the Queries that may be raised about the lawfulness or unlawfulness of *Disimulation*, and *Equivocations*; we think fit to give this general Answer: That whoever dissembles in order to do his Neighbour a prejudice, is guilty of such a Cheat and Deceit as is repugnant to Justice. He violates the Laws of Sincerity, and can never upon any pretence be reckoned an honest and fair-dealing Man. As to *Equivocations*, if they are used with a design to deceive, if the

Queries answered.

the Man expresses himself in ambiguous Terms, with an intention that the Person to whom he utters his Mind, may understand him in the wrong, not in the right Sense; these are absolutely sinful and unlawful. But if his Intention is not to deceive; tho he utters his Mind in equivocal Expressions, which may admit of another Sense than he designs them, yet he is not to be charged with a Fault, if another Person misunderstands his Meaning. After all, it were more becoming the Character of a *Sincere* Man, to make use of no such Expressions or external Signs as have a double meaning in them, but only such as are the proper Indications of the real Sentiment of his Heart.

S E C T. II.

Of Veracity.

*Veracity,
its Office.*

Veracity is a Vertue which preserves an entire Agreement betwixt our Words, our Actions, and our Thoughts; not only chiefly in religious matters and such as tend to Salvation, but in all our Transactions, Contracts, Promises, &c. made with Men.

*A Query
answered.*

But here it may be ask'd, Whether our Words ought always to bear the same Sense with what we know them to be taken in by others. *Ans.* (1.) If we would have another to give credit to our Words, we ought to utter them in the same Sense wherein he understands them, since we speak not so much for our own as his sake. (2.) When the Glory of God is concern'd, as when some Truth necessary to Salvation ought to be profess'd, we must not so much as seem to deny, but ingenuously confess it. (3.) However in this case, that Words ought not always to be us'd in that Sense wherein others take them, is evident from the Example of our Saviour, *John* 2. 19, 20, &c. in the Answer which he gave to the *Jews*. (4.) It is likewise lawful sometimes to decline a direct Answer, when by this means we may avoid a great Danger, and be so far from doing another an Injury, that we thereby promote his greater Interest.

*Its Oppo-
site, Lying.*

Repugnant to *Veracity* is *Lying*. Now a *Lye* may be defin'd thus, That it is a signifying of the Intention

of our Minds by some external Sign, whether by Words, or Gestures equivalent to them, which by no means correspond with the real Intention of our Hearts. There are then two Qualifications to render a *Lye* compleat, viz. a purpose of uttering a Falshood, and this in order to deceive. Hence appears the Difference between telling a *Lye*, and an *Untruth*; since the latter through Ignorance may be told by a good Man, tho therein he does not tell a *Lye*.

Now there are several sorts of *Lyes*, a *Pernicious* its severe one which tends to the Hurt, a *Focose* one to the Pleasure, and an *Officious* one, which tends to the Advantage of our Neighbour.

As for a *Pernicious Lye*, no Man can question the Unlawfulness thereof, it being so directly contrary to Charity and Justice; and against which God himself has declared his Vengeance. And with respect to a *Focose Lye*, it is manifestly repugnant to the Gravity of a Christian, who ought not to make Sport with a *Lye*. Besides, who shall believe him who tells a *Lye* in jest, even when he speaks in earnest?

A Pernicious and Focose Lye unlawful.

As to *Officious Lyes* which hurt no body, but are advantageous to many, preserving one from committing a Sin, and another from an imminent Danger or Loss, which could not be avoided without telling such a *Lye* (as if an angry Man pursuing another with a naked Sword in his Hand should ask me which way he went, and I should direct him another) I cannot, I say, in such cases see how an *Officious Lye* can be reckoned as a Sin. For in this there is nothing which God abominates chiefly in a *Lye*, viz. the hurt of my Neighbour, but rather that is hereby prevented, and his Welfare promoted, without doing any wrong to another. For this reason it is that the *Egyptian* Midwives, in telling an officious *Lye* for the saving the *Hebrew* Children from *Pharaoh's* Fury, were so far from being blamed, that they were commended for this their Act of Mercy, tho it proceeded from a *Lye*.

An Officious Lye not so.

Pernicious Lyes therefore are properly and chiefly *Several* forbidden; and such as are guilty thereof God is *sorts of* *Pernicious Lyes*.

'Eph. 4. 25. Prov. 6. 17. & 12. 22.

U u

said

said expressly to abominate'. Of these there are several sorts, as (1.) *Calumny*, which is charging another with a Crime of which he is not guilty, on purpose to bring a Scandal upon him. (2.) *Detraction*, which is a clandestine way of wounding the Reputation of another. (3.) *Bearing false Witness*, chiefly done in Judicial Causes, when any Man summon'd before a Judge gives in as Evidence that which he knows to be false. All these are committed either *directly*, with an Intention of doing our Neighbour an Injury: or *indirectly*, and under the pretence of Friendship, when we set forth the true Praises of another so coldly, as to vilify rather than commend him; or after we have spoke in his Praise, we slyly insinuate something to the derogation thereof.

From
whence
they pro-
ceed.

These *Lyes* proceed either, (1.) from *Malice*, when we utter those things that we knew to be false, which we have feign'd our selves, or know to be invented by others. Or (2.) from a *Rash Judgment*, which is founded upon no solid Reason. This Rashness of Judgment is various, according to the Variety of the Causes from whence it proceeds. The most excusable is that which proceeds from a mere Error of the Understanding, when a Man takes those for solid Arguments, which really are not. A more inexcusable Rashness of Judgment is that which arises from some Moroseness of Temper, whereby a Man is inclined to take all things by the worst handle. But the worst of all is, when one through ill-will or hatred to another construes all things which the other does in the worst Sense.

The Hei-
nousness
thereof.

Now all these are, (1.) directly repugnant to Charity and to the Golden Rule thereof, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, even so do unto them*. (2.) They are an Injury unto our Neighbour, since every one has a right to a good Fame in the Eyes of others, till he be robb'd of this Treasure by such malicious Practices. (3.) Hereby our Neighbour is brought into Contempt, and God's right in judging of Men is violated.

Near of kin to *Lying is Flattery*, whereby we desire, *Flattery*, to please others by a vain Praise; which is a Vice not only prejudicial to the Flatterer, but chiefly to him, who is flatter'd. Since if a Man gives ear to *Adulators*, he will find himself praised too often for that of which he has more reason to repent; and hereby he is blinded from seeing his Faults, much more from acknowledging and repenting of them, or persevering in a virtuous Course of Life.

SECT. III.

Of Fidelity or Faithfulness.

Fidelity is that part of *Justice*, which is concerned in keeping of Promises, which are either made in express Terms, or tacitly by a Nod, a Gesture, or any other Sign. In Promises expressly made, we must beware of all Ambiguity of Expressions, whereby we may deceive another.

In these we are to have no respect to Persons, be they Believers or Infidels, Hereticks or Orthodox: For to whomsoever we oblige our selves by a Promise, to them we ought to perform it; tho it were to Heathens and Idolaters.

From hence we may easily see what Judgment ought to be passed on the Doctrine of the *Romanists*, who tell us that there is no Faith to be kept with Hereticks; viz. that it is a most pernicious Error, tending to the destruction of all Faith betwixt Man and Man, and consequently destructive of all Civil Societies. Since whatever the Church of *Rome* may pretend to, 'tis notorious that they absolve not only Princes and Magistrates from the Promises they solemnly make to their Subjects, but even Subjects from the Allegiance they have sworn to their Princes, whenever either the one or the other be done to the Prejudice and Detriment of the Holy See.

That any Promise may be binding and obligatory, these things are requisite: (1.) That the Promise be made of some lawful and honest thing, else it will not be binding; since no Man is obliged to

commit an evil Action contrary to the Law of God. (2.) That he who promises be *Compos Mentis*, Master of himself, and knows what he promises, otherwise all he does is invalid. (3.) That no Injury be likely to be done by performing the Promise to the Person to whom it is made: for in such a Case 'tis evident that it ought not to be fulfilled.

A Query
answered.

But here it may be ask'd, What if the fulfilling of the Promise be prejudicial to him that makes it? *Ans.* It must be perform'd, since by a Promise we have made over our Right to any thing to another. However, there may happen some cases, wherein the performance of a Promise may be prevented, *viz.* such as are unforeseen and unexpected, which if he who made the Promise had been aware of, he would have excepted, and therefore may be supposed to have tacitly excepted. As if, for instance, I should promise to do such or such a thing by a prefix'd time; and in the mean while some unforeseen Accident, such as the Death of a Relation, a Wife, or my own Sickness should retard my Promise, or make me not punctual to my Word, all the World must own that in such and the like cases an exception is allowable; nor ought the Person to whom the Promise is made (if he has any grain of Equity and Humanity) to insist rigidly upon the performance of the Promise, but to recede a little from his Right.

Things re-
quisite in
tacit Pro-
mises.

In *Tacit Promises Fidelity* requires, (1.) That things committed to our Trust be faithfully preserved by us, with the same care as the Master of a Family keeps what is his own; and be restored upon Demand, provided it be not prejudicial to the Person who has trusted us therewith, since then Restitution must be put off for some time. (2.) That we faithfully discharge the Office we are in, and fulfil all the Parts of it. (3.) That we convert the things committed to our Management to those uses, for which they were design'd by the Master of them. Therefore those rich Men are to blame, who consume upon their Lusts the Riches, trusted to them as Stewards, to be disposed of to pious and charitable Uses. (4.) That we never forsake him who relies upon us, especially after we have given him Hopes of our Assistance.

Repug

Repugnant to *Fidelity* is *Perfidiousness*, whose Effect is *Deceit*, when a Man does not perform the Promises he has either expressly or tacitly made. Of the same nature is likewise *Treachery*, which is the forsaking of a Friend in Distress; or else the clandestine betraying him to another who will injure him; as when a Man betrays the secret Counsels of his own Party to an Enemy.

Its Opposite, Perfidiousness and Treachery.

S E C T. IV.

Of Gratitude.

Gratitude is a Vertue which is concern'd in requiring of a Benefit: and chiefly requires these three things. First, a grateful Mind, i. e. a grateful Acknowledgment of the Benefit received, and a Propensity of requiring it. Secondly, a returning of Thanks, which is done by Words testifying our Gratitude; but here this Caution is necessary, that we neither lessen the Favour, nor by Flattery magnify it too much. Thirdly, a Requital of the Courtesy, when 'tis in our power; wherein these Particulars ought to be observ'd: (1.) That if it be possible, we requite the Courtesy with a greater, since the Benefit was gratuitous, but the Return of it is a Debt. (2.) That the Return ought to bear proportion to the Quantity and Freedom wherewith the Benefit was bestowed. (3.) That the Benefit be requited with a more chearful Mind than it was received.

Gratitude its Affs.

Contrary to this Vertue is *Ingratitude*, which makes no return at all, or else a very unbecoming and unreasonable one for a Benefit received: and consists of several degrees. For either the ungrateful Man makes no Requital when he is able, tho he confesses the Favour received; or else he neither requites nor acknowledges it: or if he cannot disown, does at least dissemble it; or returns it privately, that others may not perceive that he was indebted to his Benefactor; or else repays it after such a manner, as if he were the Benefactor and the other his Deb-

Its Opposite, Ingratitude.

tor: or else makes the Requital with regret and murmuring, or else insolently and unseasonably, and in a less proportion than he received it. But the highest degree of all is, when a Man abuses his Benefactor, and repays him Evil for his Good Will.

*Its Hei-
nousness.*

This is a very detestable and heinous Crime, which renders a Man hated by all; since there is not one but what abominates an ungrateful Person. This is a Vice which the very Beasts are not guilty of, since they express their Gratitude to their Benefactors. It is an Injustice done to our Neighbour, since it defrauds him of that Honour which is his due. Nay, it is prejudicial to the ungrateful Person himself: Is he in Prosperity? he is hated by all, and look'd upon as unworthy of his Happiness. Is he miserable? no Man pities him, since by his Ingratitude he has stop'd up the Current of all Mens Liberality towards him.

Its Causes.

The Causes of this abominable Sin are, (1.) *Arrogancy*, or *Self-conceit*, in looking upon whatever is bestow'd not as a Courtesy, but as a Debt: For a Man is hardly brought to own himself obliged to another, but would willingly be his own Master; hence he forgets the Favour, that he may not seem to be beholden to any one. (2.) *Covetousness* and *Ambition*; for whilst we are always bent to fresh Enjoyments, we little think of repaying a Courtesy, nay, are rather inclin'd to requite it with Injuries. Thus Saul forgetting what David had done in destroying Goliath, being moved with Ambition, would have kill'd him. (3.) *Envy*, which repining at another's Happiness, will not be willing to increase it, nor will it have a due Esteem for the Merits of another.

1 Sam. 18. 8, &c.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIX.

Of our Duty to Our Selves.

THE Duty which consists in the Government of ^{Duty to our} ~~Selves.~~ Our selves, with all the several Parts and Branches of it, is summ'd up by the Apostle in one word [SOBRIETY] which Vertue properly denotes the laying a restraint upon our Lusts and Passions. In treating therefore of this Duty, we shall first of all explain it in general under the consideration of *Self-denial*, and then shall more distinctly treat of the several Parts and Offices of it: which will be the subject Matter of the following Sections of this Chapter.

S E C T. I.

Of Self-denial.

To *deny* is properly to relinquish the Interests of ^{Self de-} ~~another,~~ and openly to profess it either by Words ^{nial what,} or Deeds. So that we may be said to *deny our selves*, when we surrender up our selves wholly to God, and suffer no reason to draw us aside in the least from God, or the Duties we owe him. This *Self-denial* is taken in a very strict Sense by our Saviour, and seems to denote nothing else, than that our Life, and all that is dear to us ought to be look'd upon as nothing in competition with the serving of God; and that we should rather die and suffer the greatest Hardships, than out of a Fondness to this World and the Enjoyments of it, do any thing unbecoming the Religion of *Jesus Christ*. However it is commonly us'd by Divines in a larger Sense, to denote the renouncing of our own Affections and Will, and voluntarily sub-

mitting it to the Command and Will of God: So that we do as it were surrender up our selves, Souls and Bodies to him, as the absolute Sovereign over both, to be dispos'd of as he thinks fit, and to order for them what he pleases.

Its Reasonableness.

The *Reasonableness* of this Duty of *Self-denial* appears, in that we are entirely God's, who has created us; and our Saviour Christ's, who has redeemed us, and purchased us to himself both in Soul and Body to be a *peculiar People zealous unto good Works*.

In what sense it may be performed.

From hence it might seem to follow, that we can properly renounce nothing, much less consecrate it to God, as being the supreme Lord of all. But however God has left us a Freedom of Will, so that we may will somewhat different from, nay contrary to what he prescribes us. When therefore we suffer our Wills to be circumscribed by the Divine Laws, and do several things that are ungrateful, and omit others that are grateful to Flesh and Blood purely to please God, then we are said to deny our selves: Because we surrender up wholly to God, what he was pleased to give us a free use of, and left in our power; and that only for this reason, because we are not our own but are entirely God's.

Its Offices.

There are three several Acts or Offices of this Duty, all founded upon the foremention'd reason. (1.) That in the Worship and Service of God, we should not follow our own carnal Prudence, but the Conduct of God alone, in all whose Actions the highest Wisdom appears. The reason of this is, *We are not our own*; therefore neither our carnal Reason nor our Will ought to be the Director of our Actions: But *we are God's*; therefore his Wisdom and Will should over-rule all our Actions. Thus we see that Men puffed up with worldly Wisdom, who measure all things according to the false Standard of this World, were incapable of believing in Christ, but rejected his Doctrine as Foolishness: whilst on the contrary they who submitted their Reason to the Will of God, perceived herein the highest and most celebrated Wisdom. Hence the Apostle says', *The Jews require a Sign,*

1 Cor. 1. 22, 23, 24.

and

and the Greeks seek after Wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling Block, to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. (2.) Another Act of Self-denial is to bring all our Affections under subjection, so that whenever they are carried out to any grateful Objects, they may be parted from them, tho it be with some reluctance of Mind, and the highest regret to our fleshly Appetites. This ought to be performed more especially by those, who are freed from the Cross and Persecution; for by this means we take up our Cross voluntarily, crucify to our selves the Affections with the Lusts, and follow Christ, if not (as some others have done) thro the rough ways of Sufferings and Persecutions, yet by the austere Exercises of *Mortification* and *Self-denial*. (3.) And lastly, this Duty requires that we should be always ready to lay down our Lives, and part with all the Enjoyments of them for the sake of Christ, and cheerfully suffer Death, when neither the Glory of God, nor the Salvation of our selves or our Neighbour can otherwise be obtained.

From what has been said 'tis plain that all our Duty, which consists in the Government of our selves, relates to the Good or Evil that may befall us. And first it either in the general directs our Love to its proper Object, viz. *A Thirst after Spiritual things*; or particularly it restrains our Love to worldly things: thus carnal Pleasures are restrained by *Temperance*, the Love of Riches by *Contentedness*, and the Desire of Honour by *Modesty*. As to the Evils of this Life which are to be endured, here Christian *Fortitude*, *Patience* and *Constancy* come in for our Support.

S E C T. II.

Of a Desire or Thirst after Spiritual things.

The *Spiritual things* which we ought to desire and thirst after, are either the Blessings which God has promised us, or the Vertues and Duties which he requires of us, in order to the attaining those Blessings.

Wherein
our Desire
after Spi-
ritual Bles-
sings con-
sists.

Of the former sort are either the good things of the next Life, *viz.* a blessed Immortality; or the Spiritual Advantages granted to the Faithful in this Life, among which is in an especial manner the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Now our Desire of these requires, (1.) That we should esteem those Blessings as most excellent in their nature, and as absolutely necessary, without which there is no Salvation; and this our Saviour very well illustrates by the Parable of the Merchant seeking after goodly Pearls: (2.) That we suppose them to be attainable by us, but will not be obtained, unless we desire them, and do whatever God prescribes us in order thereto. For should we look upon them as unattainable by us, we shall never be moved to an ardent Desire after them: Whereas on the other hand, should we suppose that they are absolutely designed to us, and we should have them let us behave our selves how we would, this would take off from our Desire after such Vertues and Duties as God has required of us, nor could we lawfully expect the Completion of the Divine Promises.

Wherein
our Desire
after Ver-
tue consists.

This *Desire* then excites in us a Desire after the Christian Vertues, and that upon this Consideration, that the Spiritual Blessings either of this or the next Life cannot be attained without the Practice of these Vertues. This last Desire then includes in it, (1.) An ardent Love in the Exercise of Vertue, and in making a continual Progress therein. Not that a Man should think upon nothing else day nor night, since our mortal Frame cannot bear up under that; but that he should meditate frequently on these things, and whatsoever he thinks or does should be conformable to Vertue. (2.) An unwearied Endeavour in leaving nothing undone for the attaining of Righteousness, and of exercising it sincerely whenever an occasion is offered.

Its Oppo-
sites.

There are two things chiefly repugnant to this *Desire*; one *Directly*, *viz.* a Contempt of Spiritual Blessings, charged upon those who were invited to the Marriage Feast and would not come; and upon the

Mat. 13. 45, Mat. 22. 5, &c.

profane

profane Persons, who like *Esau* sell their Birthright for a Mess of Pottage¹, who are for fixing their Seat of Happiness here below, and are willing to leave God the Enjoyment of Heaven, provided he would grant them this Earth for their Abode. The other *Indirectly, viz.* a Love of this World, which the Scripture declares to be inconsistent with the Love of God².

But, that we may more distinctly treat of the Love ^{What the} of the World, passing by the various Acceptations of Love of that Word in Scripture, sometimes denoting the Pleasures and Enjoyments, at other times the wicked Men ^{this World imports,} of the World; *to love the World* signifies our being ^{and how} enamoured with, and eagerly pursuing of the Enjoyments thereof, post-poning our Concern for a more durable and better State. 'Tis natural indeed for a Man to love *Pleasure, Riches and Honour*, and to be averse to the Contraries, *Pain, Poverty and Contempt*. There is nothing sinful in such an Affection; but then it becomes criminal when it transgresses those Bounds which God has fixed, when our Love to the Enjoyments of this World becomes inordinate, and our Hearts and Affections are indifferent as to the Happiness of the other Life: That is, when we are eager in the Pursuit, anxious in the Possession, and murmur at the Loss of worldly Pleasures, Riches or Honours; whilst we are remiss and careless, cold and indifferent in our Desire after Spiritual things, and unconcern'd whether we have, or have them not. Hence it appears that a free but moderate use of the things of this World is not condemnable, since God when he made them, pronounc'd them to be *very good*; but it is the abuse of them either in the inordinate Desire, or in the extravagant Enjoyment of them, that is properly sinful. As for instance, (1.) When a Man is fond of those gross Vices, which were condemned by the better sort of Heathens. (2.) When he pursues the good things of this World with greater Ardency, Love and Esteem, than they really deserve.

¹ Heb. 12. 16. ² Mat. 6. 24. Rom. 8. 7. Jam. 4. 4.
¹ Joh. 2. 15, 16.

(3.) When

(3.) When he desires and wishes for them, thinking he should be happy if he could enjoy them; when alas it often happens that we are happy without, but miserable with these Enjoyments.

What the Christian Life requires.

That is not therefore a truly Christian Life, when a Man only takes care that he injure no Body, and lives unblamable in the sight of others; for this amounts to no more than *Moral Honesty*, and is far from *true Christianity*. But the *Christian Life* requires that he should divert his Love from the things of this World, and not anxiously pursue such things as are grateful to the Flesh, tho otherwise allowable. For we are not always to allow our selves in that which strictly taken is lawful; since he who goes to the utmost extremity of what is lawful, may soon pass the Line, and commit that which is unlawful: Virtue and Vice bordering so near to one another, that if a Man walks upon the Frontiers of the one, he is in danger of taking a false Step, and is very likely to be taken captive in the Territories of the other.

How a Love of this World may be discerned.

But that a Man may know, whether his Love be greater for the things of this World than for the Enjoyments of Heaven, let him ask his Heart seriously these following Questions. "Is my Joy greater when I make a Progress in Vertue, than when I gain any of this World's Goods? Am I more grieved at my falling into Sin, than at any Temporal Loss? What do I think of first when I awake in the Morning, what am I most willing to discourse of and hearken to? Are they Earthly and Temporal, or are they Spiritual and Heavenly things?"

A Remedy against it.

As a *Help* against an inordinate Love of the World, let us duly consider the value of things. To this purpose let us reflect, that all the Enjoyments of this Life are inconstant, such as we may be robbed of in a Moment; dash'd with many Troubles, common to the bad as well as good, and frequently fall in a greater Portion to the former: Whereas the Enjoyments of Heaven are eternal and perfect, and the only Reward of the Vertuous Soul. Especially, let us consider, that the Love of both these are inconsistent, a Love of Heavenly things will drive away the Love of Earthly, and on the contrary the Love of the latter will extinguish our Love to the former.

S E C T.

S E C T. III.

Of TEMPERANCE.

TEMPERANCE is properly that Vertue which *Temperance,* moderates our Affections in their Pursuit after the *wherein it consists.* Pleasures of the Flesh, which we enjoy in common with the Beasts. *Temperance* therefore chiefly consists in restraining that *Concupiscence*, which the external Senses, when any Object grateful to them is offer'd, are apt to excite in us. Not that 'tis criminal to be sensible of a Pleasure when any Object is offered grateful to the Flesh, since this is natural, unavoidable, tending to the Exercise of our Vertue, and without which there could be no such thing: But we are to beware of being carried away with that Pleasure, and of immoderately prosecuting the things grateful to the Flesh; and we are to lay a Restraint upon that Concupiscence which is conveyed through the outward Organs of Sense to the Heart.

The Senses by which we perceive *Pleasures* are five, of two all of which may transgress their Bounds; but *Temperance* is chiefly concerned in bridling the Pleasures arising from the Senses of *Tasting* and *Touching*, as being the most gross and brutish. Hence it is that *Temperance* consists of two parts: First *Sobriety*, which lays a Restraint upon the Pleasures of *Taste*. And Secondly *Chastity*, which puts the Reins upon the Pleasures of *Touching*, especially *Venereal* ones.

SOBRIETY is that Vertue which keeps a *1. Sobriety.* Medium in the Pleasures, that arise from eating and drinking, with respect both to the Quantity and Quality thereof. But tho here no Universal Rule can be laid down, some Constitutions being stronger, others weaker than that of another, and some requiring more, others less Nourishment; nay one and the same Man at different times, requiring more or less, as the different Habit and *Crafts* of his Body is; yet these special Rules ought to be observed both with respect to the Quantity and Quality of what we eat and drink.

(1.) As to the *Quantity*, we ought not to overcharge our

our Stomachs, so as to render our Bodies and Minds useles, and unfit for contemplating of Heavenly things (2.) As to the *Quality*, we are not to covet such delicious Meat or Drink, as may provoke us to eat when we are not hungry, or to drink when we are not thirsty; for in such a case we deviate from the very end of Nourishment, are drawn in insensibly to sensual Pleasures, and by the Allurements thereof are prompted to take a greater Quantity of Food than is fitting.

Queries
answered.

But here it may be asked, What Measure is here precisely to be observ'd? Is it not lawful, especially for the richer sort, to eat of a more delicious Dish than ordinary? To this we answer, That the principal end of eating and drinking is to restore that strength of Body which is requisite for every one to go through with his particular Calling and Labour; and in this every Man's Prudence must be his own Director. But, it has pleased the Divine Bounty to give us all things abundantly to enjoy, not only for the Necessity, but also for the honest and moderate Comfort of our Bodies, that so being the more refreshed we might return with greater Chearfulness to our Labours.

If it be asked, Whether the Rich may live more splendidly than others, and whether it be lawful at any time to make any publick Entertainments, or to be present at them? To this we answer, That provided Modesty and Sobriety be observ'd, they are lawful, since our blessed Saviour not only honoured a Marriage-Feast with his Presence and first Miracle of turning Water into Wine, but is describ'd as one *eating and drinking*, i. e. one who did not live so austere as John the Baptist, but familiarly conversed with Men, and upon occasion eat and drank with them in their publick Entertainments.

Cautions
to be us'd
in publick
Entertain-
ments both
by the En-
tertainer
and his
Guests.

But, in these let the Entertainer and his Guests take the following Cautions along with them: First, Let not the Entertainer make a Feast for the gratifying of the Flesh, by loading his Guests with Meats and Drinks (as is the Practice of too many, who never think they make their Guests welcom unless they send 'em home drunk; but let it be purely to testify his

Friend-

Friendship, and to take a little honest Diversion, that thereby he may be incited to praise God, and return the more chearfully to his business. In order to this, let him avoid, (1.) Too great a Plenty of Dishes, only for Pomp and Ostentation sake. (2.) All nice and delicious Food, that is scarce and costly. (3.) Too chargeable an *Apparatus*, and luxurious Shew, especially if it be beyond his Ability, injurious to his Relations, and making him incapable of being charitable to the Poor. Secondly, Let the Guests of such Entertainments beware, (1.) That they do not frequent them too often. (2.) Nor anxiously hunt after them. (3.) Nor eat and drink so much as to overload and render themselves incapable of praying and watching: Especially great care ought to be taken, that we do not under any Pretence whatsoever press upon others to drink too much.

But here it may be asked, Whether it be lawful to drink to another's good Health? *Another* *Query answered.* Considered in itself, I see no harm in it; for thereby we testify our Affection to another, and wish him Success in his honest Enterprizes. But if such *Healts* be drank (as is too commonly practised) in order that others may be forced to drink deeply, and at last be inebriated, they are absolutely unlawful. For 'tis a very foolish and wicked thing for a Man to lose his own Health by drinking to another's, which is not thereby promoted. Besides, 'tis very criminal to transgress any Duty of Christianity under any Pretence whatsoever.

Sobriety is contrary, first to *Gluttony*, which is criminal in the *Quantity* and *Quality* of what we eat. *contrary,* This Vice is repugnant to the natural use of Food, unbecoming the nature of an intelligent Being, as rendering a Man incapable of serving God. *1. to Gluttony.*

Secondly, it is contrary to *Drunkenness*, or excessive drinking. Various are the Degrees of that Sin: for either it is *tippling*, when Men drink a great Quantity of Wine or other intoxicating Liquors, not so much for the extinguishing of their Thirst, as for the gratifying the Pleasures of the Flesh, tho they do not transgress the Bounds so far as to darken their Understandings: Or else it is *downright Drunkenness*, when a Man indulges himself so far in his Liquors, that his Mind

is

is clouded, and the use of his Reason is for some time lost. This Sin is not only repugnant to the natural end of Drinking, but divesting the Man of his Reason, transforms him into a Beast; leaving no other difference betwixt the one and the other, but only the outward Shape. Add to this, that intemperate Drinking feeds those ill Humours in the Body, which too often break out into a Flame by Fevers, or swell the Man with the Dropsy, or wash him away by a wasting, lingering Consumption; all which end at last in Death.

2. Chastity. The second Part of *Temperance* is *CHASTITY*, which more immediately lays a Restraint upon those Pleasures that arise from the Sense of *Touching*; tho it has an Influence likewise over the Pleasures that proceed from the other Senses, so far as they relate to *Touching*.

Its Duty with respect to the Sense of Touching. As to the Sense of *Touching*, *Chastity* requires, (1.) That we should not desire unlawful Pleasures at all, nor even lawful ones immoderately, but with such an Indifferency as that we may be well enough without them. (2.) That we should not pursue any carnal Pleasure out of Wedlock, and in Wedlock we should observe due Bounds. (3.) That the very Remembrance of lawful Pleasures be as far as possible erased out of our Memories, lest our Minds being distracted by the Thoughts thereof, should be less intent upon the Contemplation of heavenly things.

Its perfection, perpetual Virginity. The Perfection of this Vertue is *perpetual Virginity*, or an entire abstaining from these Pleasures both in Soul and Desire, and in Body and Deed. However *Chastity* does not absolutely require this: and tho the primitive Fathers might magnify *Celibacy* above a married State, yet all Men have not such a Gift of Continence, and therefore of such it is said that it is *better to marry than to burn*.

What it requires with respect to the Senses of Seeing, Hearing, and Smelling. As to the Pleasures proceeding from the other Senses, so far as they relate to *Touching*, *Chastity* lays a restraint upon them. (1.) The *Sight* is to be turned from unlawful Objects: for by directing our Eyes too often towards them, we shew that we covet and admire them; and by frequent contemplating them, the Mind is excited to lust after them. If therefore such Objects should at any time offer themselves unawares to

to our View, we ought to be so far upon our guard, as to suffer the Sight of them to have no more influence over our Hearts, than if we never had seen them.

(2.) The *Hearing* ought to be averſe from looſe and obſcene Speeches, which we are neither to utter our ſelves, nor hear others ſpeak without Indignation.

(3.) A Reſtraint ought to be laid upon our *Smelling*, nor are we to procure or be fond of ſuch Perfumes as tend to Effeminacy: for theſe too often prove Incitements to Luſt, and unchaſte Perſons make as often uſe of them to that purpoſe.

The Vices contrary to *Chſtity* are either *Internal* *Its Con-* or *External*. The *Internal* are all *impure Deſires*, *traries.* whereby a Man's Heart is affected, and his Thoughts continually bent upon unclean Objects. And how repugnant ſuch Deſires are to Chſtity, appears from hence, that not only *Chſtity* is properly a Vertue of the Mind, but our Saviour alſo tells us, That *whoſoever*

looketh upon a Woman ſo as to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery already with her in his Heart '. The *External* Vices oppoſite to *Chſtity* are, (1.) in general *Impurity* and *Làſciviousneſs*, whether expreſſ'd by Words, Looks, a wanton Dreſs and Geſture, or by laſcivious Contacts. But (2.) more particularly repugnant to *Chſtity* are ſuch Acts of *Uncleanneſs* as are againſt Nature, condemn'd by St. Paul, Rom. 1.

or ſuch as are natural, committed either in an unmarried State, which is *Fornication*; or in Wedlock, and then 'tis *Adultery*: But of this more hereafter, when we come to treat of the *Relative Duties*.

Helps againſt all manner of *Uncleanneſs* are, (1.) *Helps to Chſtity.* To avoid all occasions that may tempt us to it: For

looſe Deſires, under a ſemblance of Pleaſure that is moſt grateful to Fleſh and Blood, inſinuate themſelves into our Souls, and are not ſo eaſily conquered as at the firſt Onſet. (2.) To be always employ'd ſome honeſt Labour: for nothing is a greater Incentive to Luſt, than Sloth and Idleneſs. For if the Mind, which is an active Principle, be not employ'd in lawful and vertuous Thoughts, it will ſoon buſy

it self in those that are unlawful and vicious. (3.) To these we ought to add, frequent Fasting for the subduing of the Flesh, which by high feeding grows wanton and rebels against the Spirit. (4.) To use frequent and fervent Prayer to God, for the Spirit of Purity, and to keep us from all impure Thoughts and Desires. (5.) We ought to read and meditate often upon the Scriptures, which will fill our Minds with Holy Thoughts, and prevent any carnal ones from breaking in.

S E C T. IV.

OF CONTENTEDNESS.

*Contented-
ness.*

CONTENTEDNESS taken in a large sense, is that Vertue whereby a Man is easy in whatsoever State and Condition he is plac'd; and denotes an Evenness and Sedateness of Temper. But in a more strict sense, it is that Vertue, whereby a Man rests satisfied with the Enjoyment of those things, that are at present necessary for the Support of himself and Family. Various are the Offices of this Vertue, which ought to be applied distinctly, according to the different Conditions he may be in with respect to this World's Goods: for he may either want the Necessaries of Life, or he possesses them, or he abounds with Superfluities. In all these different cases *Contentedness* rules and regulates the Man, and accordingly enjoins three several things.

*Its Offices,
1. To keep
us from
murmur-
ing.*

First, it enjoins a Man not to murmur or repine at his State, but to rest satisfied in it whatever it be; and this takes place in all the three fore-mention'd Instances. If we are in *Poverty*, then *Contentedness* teaches us to resign our selves to the Divine Will, and to believe that Providence has good reasons for what it does; and since God is pleas'd to afflict us with *Poverty*, in order to exercise and try our Faith, we ought to render it approved in his sight. But if God has bestow'd upon us a *Competency*, then as we have less reason to complain, so *Contentedness* teaches us the more easily to be satisfied with our Condition;

dition; and when we look upon others that are in a more flourishing State, it bids us look down upon the many others more miserable than our selves, who yet ought to be content. Lastly, If we have an *Abundance*, there is no reason of complaining; and they who do so are more properly the Monsters of Human Nature, than Men endued with a rational Soul; like Fire, the more Fewel is cast into it, the fiercer it burns.

Secondly, it enjoins a Man not to be too craving or greedy after more than he enjoys, but to rest satisfied with Necessaries. However, this does not debar a Man from bettering his Condition: For 'tis one thing to be restless and bent upon farther Enjoyments, and another to endeavour honestly to mend our Fortune with a Resignation to Divine Providence.

But here it may be ask'd, What are things *necessary*? A Query or in other words what is a *Competency*? *Ans^w. answered.* Such a general Rule as might be observ'd by all cannot be prescrib'd, since one Man wants more than another. But for a more distinct Reply we say, that a Man may be consider'd either simply and absolutely, or as he is in a publick Capacity, such as a Citizen, a Master of a Family, a Husband, a Magistrate, &c. According to this Distinction there are two sorts of *Necessaries*, some necessary to Nature it self, and others for the support of a Man in the Station wherein he is. The *Necessaries* which Nature requires, and without which we cannot live, are Food, and Raiment, and a House to live in, as also those things that are requisite for the preservation and restoring of Health. With respect to things necessary to support any Person in the Station wherein he is plac'd, we say, That a Master of a Family ought to provide things necessary for his Wife, Children, and Servants: That a Magistrate ought to have wherewith to support the Authority and Grandeur of the Place which he holds; and a Citizen must have somewhat besides *Necessaries*, that he may be able to pay Taxes.

Again it may be ask'd, Whether it be lawful for a Man to acquire more than what is necessary? *Ans^w. How far lawful to acquire more than necessities.* There is an Industry which is free from all anxious Cares of getting Wealth, but yet does not refuse it, when

when it comes in, and God is pleas'd to bless our honest Labours: this then is lawful. And there is another anxious and solicitous Care, whereby a Man is wholly intent upon getting of Riches, thinking he can never be happy till he has them, and hence bestows all his Time and Pains in the acquiring thereof. In this a Man may be criminal, (1.) When to the detriment of his Neighbour, he by Fraud or Violence or any other unjust means endeavours to heap up Riches. (2.) When without any prejudice to his Neighbour, he pursues the Riches of this World with the greatest Ardency and Affection of Mind, contrary to that Rule of our Saviour, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*¹.

3. Not to
be overfond
of Riches.

But thirdly, *Contentedness* teaches a Man not to be over-fond of Riches, nor to be over-solicitous about the Time to come, but chearfully to make use of the Blessings he enjoys. This is a general Rule suited to all Conditions of Life, and more especially regards the Rich; and comprehends under it the following Particulars: (1.) That we place not our Confidence in the Riches we possess, like the rich Man in the Gospel, who solac'd his Soul in the midst of his large Possessions, with singing to it this *Requiem*; *Soul, thou hast much Goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry*². Now the Reason why we ought not to trust in Riches, is, because they are of an uncertain fleeting nature; such as a thousand unforeseen Accidents may rob us of, which cannot in their own nature render the Man who has them more happy, tho too often they make him more miserable than if he had them not; and of which at last we shall be deprived by Death. (2.) That we do not rack our Minds with an anxious Solitude about things future, according to that Advice of our Saviour, *Take no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self: sufficient to the Day is the Evil thereof*³. Not that all Provision for Futurity is here forbidden, but only such a solicitous Care as is attended with a Distrust of God's Providence.

¹ Mat. 6. ² Luk. 12. 19. ³ Mat. 6. 34.

(3.) That

(3.) That we should not be too much concern'd about the keeping of Riches, nor consequently disturb our selves with the fear of losing them. (4.) That we should not grieve and repine at the Loss of Riches, but remembring the Uncertainty of them, should say, with *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord*, *Job* 1. 21.

From these things it is plain, that in it self it is not unlawful, nor repugnant to the Christian Religion, to acquire or possess Riches, provided the Acquisition and Possession of them be void of Solicitude. That it is allowable to procure things necessary, we have already evinc'd; and *St. Paul* in saying (*1 Tim.* 6. 7, 8.) that *having Food and Raiment, we ought to be therewith content*, implies that these may be lawfully sought after. Nay, our Saviour has taught us as much, when he commands us to pray the Heavenly Father to *give us this Day our daily Bread*'. But in case God thinks fit to deny us these, especially in time of Persecution, we must resign our selves to the Divine Will; and learn with the Apostle, *in whatsoever State we are, therewith to be content*. Nor is it less allowable to acquire and possess more than bare Necessaries: For we read of *St. John* who had an Estate of his own², and of several rich Women who followed *Jesus*, and administered to them of their Substance³: and tho all of them were obliged to Acts of *Charity*, yet do we not find that they were commanded to part with what they had.

Contrary to the Vertue of *Contentment* is *Covetousness*, or an insatiable craving after more. It is call'd by several Names in Scripture, which describe its Nature to us; and consists in these Particulars; (1.) In not being contented with things necessary; hence the Man sets no bounds to his Desires, is still grasping after more, and as his Riches increase, his Thirst after them increases proportionably. (2.) In not daring to make use of the things which a Man has; for being intent upon increasing his Wealth, he is loth to part with the least share of his Store, tho

¹ *Mat.* 6. 11. ² *John* 19. 27. ³ *Luk.* 8. 2.

his own and his indigent Neighbours Wants call for it. (3.) In being rack'd with an anxious Solitude about Futurity, and cruciated with a continual Fear of losing what he has : hence he distrusts every body, and trembles at the very shaking of a Reed. (4.) In placing his Confidence in Riches, and distrustful of God unless he has them. (5.) In grieving too much at the Loss of his Wealth, as if he were robb'd of his true Happiness, and reduc'd to real Misery.

*The Effects
of Cove-
tousness.*

The Effects of this Sin are very pernicious, and hence it is called *the root of all Evil*¹; for it produces innumerable other Vices both in the *Civil* and *Religious Life*. First, with respect to the *Civil Life*, it is the Parent of all the Injustice, Fraud and Knavery committed in the World: for whilst a Man is greedy of Gain, he leaves no Stone unturn'd, but right or wrong he endeavours after it. And how hard-hearted does it render him to others; nay, how can he be expected to be charitable to the Poor, who is so unmerciful as to starve himself? But, Secondly, with respect to the *Religious Life*, the Effects of it are still more mischievous; for it alienates the Mind from God and Religion; the Man being wholly taken up in gathering Riches, has no Heart to attend to the Word of God, which manifestly condemns his Practice, and recommends to him *the seeking of those things which are above*: For, as our Saviour says, it is impossible to serve and please two such opposite Masters, as God and Mammon are². Add to this the many severe Punishments which God has been pleased to inflict on those that have been guilty of the Sin of *Covetousness*, even in this World. Witness the Instances recorded in Scripture of *Achan*³, the Sons of *Samuel*⁴, *Gebazi*⁵, *Judas*⁶, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*⁷, not to mention any more, who were exemplarily punished for their covetous and greedy Humours and Practices.

*Helps a-
gainst it.*

Helps against *Covetousness* are, (1.) Faith or Trust in God, by which relying on his Power, Goodness

¹ 1 Tim. 6. 10. ² Mat. 6. 24. ³ Josh. 7. 20. ⁴ 1 Sam. 8. 1, 2, 3. ⁵ 2 Kings 5. 20. ⁶ Mat. 27. 4, 5. ⁷ Acts 5. and

and Veracity, a Man is most certainly persuaded, that if he truly serve God, he shall never want what is necessary for him; but that God will either give him things convenient, or means whereby to attain them, or Favour in the sight of others, or lastly will make him abundance of Recompence for the loss of Temporal things by Spiritual and Heavenly Blessings, such as Peace of Conscience, Contentedness of Mind, and Eternal Life. (2.) A Consideration of the emptiness of those things which *Covetousness* hunts after, which conduce nothing to the real and solid Happiness of a Man, who might have been well enough without them, and he who has the greatest plenty of them may be a compleat and finished Wretch. (3.) A liberal Beneficence to the Poor, by which that craving after *more* would be abated. Hence the Apostle, dissuading the Rich from trusting in the uncertainty of Riches, commands them *to do good, to be rich in good Works, and ready to distribute*; adding a Promise, that by this means *they would lay up in Store for themselves a good Foundation, or rather Treasure, against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.*

S E C T. V.

Of Modesty or Humility.

Modesty is that Vertue which moderates our Pursuit after Honour, and renders us humble in our own Eyes: From whence it appears that there are two Offices belonging to it, *viz.* to think meanly of our selves, and to be moderate in desiring of Honour, or to grant it freely to another. According to these two Offices, the Acts of *Modesty* are, (1.) Never to arrogate to our selves the good things we have not, or greater than those we have. (2.) Never to be puffed up with the Conceit of any Qualifications and Endowments, whether of Nature, as Beauty and Strength; or of Fortune, as Wealth and Power; or of Mind,

as Knowledge, Wisdom, Grace, &c. (3.) Not to make a vain Ostentation of the Gifts we are endued with, but rather prevent others from proclaiming them. (4.) Never to despise another inferiour to our selves, but rather be his Minister; of which Christ has given us an Example in washing his Disciples Feet, tho he were their Lord and Master. (5.) Never to hunt after worldly Honours, whereby we may be above the rest of Mankind, for this is that *Pride of Life* condemn'd by the Apostle. (6.) Never to affect or express any Luxury or Pomp in our Habits, Furniture, Buildings, Diet, &c. since this is contrary to *Christian Humility*.

These then are the several Acts of a Christian *Modesty*, or *Humility*. But here 'tis to be noted, (1.) With respect to the fifth Act mentioned, that the Superiority which Magistrates in the publick Administration of Affairs have over others, is not repugnant to *Christian Humility*. Their Authority is necessary to keep the World in order, and tho they assume to themselves a Power over others, yet this is not contrary to *Modesty*. But then Men are criminal, when they use indirect and unbecoming Methods for the attaining of an Office; or when they have it, lord it over the rest of Mankind, and neglect those Duties that are incumbent on every Christian Magistrate; or do such things for the keeping in an honourable Post, as are contrary to their own Consciences. (2.) As to the last Act of *Modesty*, with respect to our Habits, Furniture, &c. this Caution ought to take place: "That as we ought not to offend against Modesty and Gravity, by luxurious and pompous Garbs, Furniture, Diet, &c. nor to transgress the Bounds of our Estate, Rank and Quality, by any of these; so neither ought we by too great a preciseness, either to deny our selves those things that are becoming the State and Condition we hold in the World, or to condemn others rashly for living more splendidly than ordinary, as if they did it out of vain Glory."

1 Joh. 13. 13, &c. 2 Joh. 2. 15, 16.

Contrary

Contrary to *Modesty* is *Pride*, of which there are *its Oppo-* three sorts: (1.) *Self-love*, when a Man is so fond of *site, Pride,* his own Parts, that he contemns and despises the Ad- *with the* vice of others, and cannot away with a Monitor or *several* Reprover; nay, will not submit to the Authority of *kindsof it.* those who are above him. (2.) *Boasting*, which properly consists in Words, when a Man brags of what he has not, or of more than he really has, or assumes to himself too much Honour upon that account. (3.) Downright *Pride* or *Haughtiness*, whereby a Man swells and looks big upon those below him, upon the account of any outward or inward Endowment that he has more than them.

But here a very proper Question may be ask'd, *A Query* Whether it be *Pride* to maintain, that God in the *answered.* Election of Men to eternal Salvation has a regard to the Faith and good Works of him whom he elects? *Ans.* By no means; for this Doctrine does not destroy Divine Grace, the very Decree of saving Men, and calling them to Salvation being entirely the Work of God's Goodness. No Merit is asserted, since Remission of Sins and preventing Grace, without which no saving Work could be performed; is acknowledged. Here only the Condition required by God in order to Salvation is urg'd, not as a Merit, but as an indispensable Duty, without the performance of which God will not make us the Heirs of eternal Glory. This is not to destroy the Divine Grace, or to magnify our selves, but the *working out of our Salvation with fear and trembling*.

S E C T. VI.

Of Fortitude, Patience, and Constancy.

Fortitude is sometimes taken in a large Sense, to *Fortitude* denote that Constancy of Mind, which is conspicuous *what.* not only in undertaking of difficult Enterprizes, but likewise in bearing of Hardships; and thus it includes

Patience. Sometimes 'tis taken in a stricter sense to denote that particular Vertue whereby a Man contemns Dangers, and undauntedly sets upon some daring Undertaking. We shall at present treat of this Vertue as taken in both these senses.

What a Christian ought to expect and arm himself against.

But for the more distinct view of *Fortitude*, we think fit to premise, That God has not called Christians to a soft and effeminate kind of Life, but to a difficult and laborious one. He has set them a Race, which will cost them a great deal of Pains and Difficulty, if not the shedding of their Blood, in the running of it: The very nature of Christianity is such, as to require one who professes it to prepare himself for the greatest Hardships. 'Tis not only to believe in, but openly to profess our Belief in a *Crucified Jesus*, and this in opposition to *Jews*, Infidels, and Atheists, tho it may cost us our Lives for so doing. Hence it is that whoever pretends to be the Disciple of Christ, must arm himself against, tho he should never actually meet with and suffer Persecution. Not that every one who does not bear the Cross is upon that account no true Christian, but only he must be ready to bear it whenever God is pleas'd to lay it upon him.

The first Act of Fortitude.

The Offices therefore relating to this Vertue are two. The first is, that we should bear with the greatest Afflictions, even Death it self, for the sake of Christ, when the Glory of God, the Salvation of our Neighbours and of our selves cannot otherwise be obtain'd. For in case all these can be secur'd, and we can fairly avoid the Cross, 'tis by no means inconsistent with Christian *Fortitude* to shun it; since Christian Prudence requires that we should be *as wise as Serpents*, tho we ought to be *as harmless as Doves*; and if we are persecuted in one City, our Saviour himself has given us Toleration to fly for shelter to another¹. But if this cannot be done, then we are to take care that the Doctrine for which we suffer be true, else we shall be so far from being Martyrs, that we shall only suffer for our own Humour and Fan-

¹ Mat. 10. 23.

cy: Nor ought we wantonly and lightly to run our selves headlong into Danger, when neither the Glory of God, nor the Welfare of our own or our Neighbours Souls call for it.

The other Office of *Fortitude* is, that whenever it pleases Divine Providence to call us out to suffer for the sake of Christ, we should as *Christians* endure all manner of Evils, even the worst of Deaths, with a cheerful and courageous Temper of Mind, and never sink under any Adversities whatsoever. Now, that we may be excited thereto, we ought to consider the End and Design of God in exposing us to such Persecutions; which is, First, his own Glory, in having such Servants, as no Torments can divert from their Duty to him. Secondly, the Welfare of others, either of the Wicked, who seeing what a flagrant Love of sincere Piety is in those who truly believe, may be convinc'd of their own Impiety¹; or of those, who are neither truly pious, nor downright wicked, but may be excited to follow our good Examples. But, thirdly, and chiefly the Good of those who suffer, who are not only persuaded that these Afflictions cannot separate them from the Love of God², but are tokens of his Affection, and means of promoting their Salvation these several ways: (1.) Because by these Afflictions they are wean'd from the Love of the World, and look upon it as the Place where all Miseries reside. (2.) Being free from the Love of the World, they learn to thirst after Heaven and the Enjoyments thereof. (3.) Hereby they are corroborated in their Faith of heavenly things; for when they perceive there is no Reward of their Piety here below, they are the more easily inclin'd to believe that there is one laid up in Heaven for them. (4.) Persecutions excite Men to pour out fervent Prayers to God, being sensible how much they stand in need of his Divine Spirit. (5.) They try their Faith and Constancy. (6.) Hereby they are the more confirm'd in mutual Charity, and stand up with united Hearts to oppose the common

¹ 1 Pet. 2. 12, 15. & 3. 16. Mat. 5. 16. ² Rom. 8. 38, 39.

Enemy. (7.) Hereby they are kept from falling into Sin; for the Reason why many have attain'd to Salvation, has been their want of Temptations to Sin. (8.) Hereby being chastis'd as with a Rod, they are reclaim'd from Sin, into which thro Inadvertency, or some powerful Temptation, they fell. (9.) Being thus tried they are approved of by God, and upon such a Trial and Approbation they are crown'd at last with Glory.

Motives to bear the Cross patiently.

For a farther Incitement to bear the Cross patiently, let us consider, (1.) That the most a Man parts with, is but his Life; which how dear soever to him, is yet but of a weak and frail nature, which he must lay down in a little time, tho no Persecution rob him of it; and the Loss of which God will sufficiently recompense with Life everlasting, when he will for ever be out of the reach of his cruel Persecutors. (2.) Let us reflect upon the Example of Christ himself, who suffer'd, as well as did, so great things for us. How was he tempted and afflicted, and what an ignominious and accursed Death did he suffer for our sakes? And shall we think it hard to endure Persecution for his sake, especially when he will crown our light Afflictions which are but for a moment, with an eternal and exceeding weight of Glory?

Things requisite in a Christian Suffering.

But that our Suffering may be truly Christian, and acceptable to God, 'tis requisite, (1.) That we should not in our Afflictions murmur against him, as if he neither favour'd us nor the Cause we profess, but dealt hardly by us. (2.) That we should wish no Evil to our Persecutors, this being a sign of Impatience; much less should we give them ill Language, or resist them with Violence. (3.) That we should do nothing displeasing to God, or scandalous to others, for escaping the hands of our Persecutors. (4.) That we demean not our selves with less Courage than becomes Men supported by the Hopes of Immortality.

Its Opposite, in the Excess, Rashness.

From what has been said, we may easily learn which are the Extremes of this Vertue. Opposite to it in the Excess is *Rashness*, when a Man casts himself into danger when there is no necessity for it; and when he might have avoided it, without any breach of his Duty, or any prejudice done to the Divine Truth.

Contrary

Contrary to the Virtue of *Fortitude* in the *Defect*, *In the De-*
 is (1.) *Fearfulness*, when a Man for fear of others, *feel, Fear-*
 and terrified at the Punishments they may inflict on *fulness and*
 him, renounces the Truth by openly or tacitly deny- *Impati-*
 ing of it. (2.) *Impatience*, when a Man behaves him- *ence.*
 self too effeminately, murmuring against God, or re-
 viling his Persecutors, or denying the Truth, upon the
 account of any Hardships he may suffer for the inge-
 nuous Profession of it.

S E C T. VII.

Of the Use of Things Indifferent.

Things indifferent are such, as in their own nature *Things In-*
 are neither good nor evil, which may be us'd or not *different*
 us'd without Sin, and consequently are either good or *what.*
 evil, upon the account of some Circumstances in the
 using of them. Whatever then is commanded or for-
 bidden, cannot be reckon'd indifferent; but those
 things are only so, which are either expressly allow'd of,
 or no where prohibited by God: of which nature are
 several external things relating to Meats, Drinks,
 Raiment, and the Actions of a Civil Life.

Now to be well inform'd in this Liberty, is of great *Liberty in*
 use to a Christian. For should a Man's Conscience be- *the Use of*
 gin to waver, should he question whether it be lawful *them.*
 for him to have any thing beyond what is necessary
 for the support of Life, he will never be secure,
 whilst he thinks that his Body could be sustained with
 meaner things than he makes use of; and by this
 means he will either fall into Despair, or cast off
 Christianity as an unreasonable Yoke, or will be too
 apt to condemn others who make use of that Liberty.

But tho' *Things indifferent* may be us'd, yet some *Rules to*
 Circumstances may change the very nature of them, *be observ'd*
 and therefore some Rules are necessary to be observ'd, *therein.*
 with respect to *Faith* and *Charity*.

First, with respect to *Faith*, these Rules ought to be *1. With re-*
 observ'd: (1.) We must be fully satisfy'd of our Li- *spect to*
 berty, and be able to give a good account of it before *Faith.*
 God; being very well assur'd that what we do is law-
 ful.

ful. (2.) That we make use of things lawful to the Honour of God¹, in testifying our Gratitude, not only for our having received at his hands such a Variety of Food for the support of Life; but also for his having granted us in Christ the free use of all without that Distinction that was formerly made². (3.) We must not be overfond of, or enslaved to this our Liberty. (4.) We must beware that the Use of things lawful does not lead us to those that are unlawful; but Faith ought always to be our Director, that we may not use lawful things but lawfully, always looking upon them as things *Indifferent*, and such as relate only to the Animal Life.

2. With
respect to
Charity.

Secondly, the Law of *Charity* comprehends under it the following Rules: (1.) That we should not make use of our Liberty in contempt of our weaker Brethren, *i. e.* of those Believers who are not as yet fully satisfied of the Christian Liberty. (2.) That we give not an occasion to others of Contention, who seeing us do those things undauntedly which they think to be unlawful, will be too apt to blame us as not walking like Christians; and hence whilst we endeavour to justify what we do, Quarrels and Contentions will arise. (3.) That it be not done to the scandal or offence of the Weak³, since our Saviour has pronounc'd⁴, That *it were better for a Man, that a Millstone were hanged about his Neck, and that he were drowned in the Depth of the Sea, than that he should offend one of the Little Ones that believe in him.*

A Scandal
or Offence,

For the farther explaining the last of these Rules, it may not be amiss to say something in particular of the Nature of *Scandal* or *Offence*, both as 'tis given and received.

1. Either
given.

The *Scandals* or *Offences given*, are such as owe their Original to those things, which in their own nature tend to the leading another into Sin; whether the Offence be or be not taken, or whether without or with the Intention of him that gives it; which last is most mischievous and diabolical. First, it may be done with an Intention of him that gives it,

¹ 1 Cor. 10. 31. ² Rom. 14. 6. ³ 1 Tim. 4. 5. ⁴ Rom. 14. 13, 21. ⁵ Mat. 18. 6.

Chap. 19. *Body of Divinity.*

these two ways; either wilfully and *directly*, when a Man by Command, Persuasion or Gifts, solicites another to commit a Sin: or *indirectly*, when he by what he does intends something else, tho he be not ignorant, that from thence a Sin may arise. Secondly, a *Scandal* or Offence may be given without any design of doing so; and that these several ways: (1.) When a Man teaches such a Doctrine, as when taken altogether tends to the Destruction of Piety, and the rendring Men secure and profane in their Lives and Conversations. (2.) When a Man who is eminent in Authority, Power, Knowledg, or Reputation for Sanctity, gives a bad Example to others. This is doubtless a very great Scandal, since Men are influenced more by Example than Precept; and are more apt to eye what another does, than to listen to what he says. (3.) When he unseasonably uses this Christian Liberty before those who are weak; for such an one by the Apostle is said to give Offence to his weaker Brethren.

A *Scandal* or Offence received is, when a Man by the Action of another is induced to commit a Sin. ^{2. Or taken.} Now this Action may be either evil, and then he who gives and he who receives the Scandal are guilty; or else it may be good, and then the Scandal lies at the door of him who takes it. The Scandal then may be taken, (1.) When one offended at the Action of another, conceives a bad Opinion of the Christian Religion, as giving too great an Indulgence to the Flesh, and thereby is unwilling to embrace it, or is tempted to renounce and forsake it after he has embrac'd it. (2.) When by the Doctrine or Example of another he is drawn into Sin.

From what has been said it appears, that tho the Use of things *indifferent* be lawful, and nothing is unclean to those who are clean, yet they lose their Indifferency and become unlawful, when there is any fear of an Offence being given. For by giving a Scandal we offend, (1.) Against *Charity*, in that we grieve our Brother, and by our Action bring him into

¹ Rom. 14. 13. 1 Cor. 8. 10.

danger of eternal Damnation tho we might have avoided it, had we not been addicted too much to the gratifying of a vain Liberty. (2.) Against the Christian Religion, which is upon that account blasphem'd by Infidels, as if it gave the loose to our vicious and carnal Appetites. (3.) Against Christ, since as far as in us lies, we destroy him for whom Christ died, and consequently render his Blood of no effect, with respect to our weak Brother for whom it was shed. (4.) Against God, whose Glory we diminish, by subverting as far as is possible the Faith of our weak Brother, which he has wrought in him by the Efficacy of his Word and Spirit.

A Caution. Upon the whole matter it must be said, that they who needlessly *give* or *take* an Offence, with respect to *indifferent things*, are equally to blame, since neither the one nor the other can justify themselves before God. Prudence therefore and Charity ought to be our Rules and Guides in these matters; and we ought never to give an Offence to a weak Brother, where it may be avoided; nor ought we to take an Offence, but where 'tis justly offered to us: much less ought we upon any account to be drawn into Sin by the Example or Precept of any Person whatsoever.

C H A P. XX.

Of Relative Duties.

*Relative
Duties con-
sidered.*

Hitherto we have treated of those Duties that are incumbent on all Christians alike: It remains that we should in this Chapter discourse of such as are necessary to each of them, according to the different Relations they bear to one another. For tho every one might easily know his Duty by a prudent application of the general Precepts to every particular kind of Life, yet it may be requisite to lay down more distinctly some special Rules, that are not so obvious to every Understanding.

We lay down this as a Foundation of what follows, *viz.* That tho we are all Brethren in Christ, and in his

his and God's fight are upon the same level, with respect to eternal Salvation, yet the Christian Religion has not destroyed the different States and Conditions of Men in the Civil Life. This, how clear and self-evident soever it may seem to be, we think fit to evince by the following Arguments taken out of Scripture, for the sake of some who deny it. (1.) The Scripture clearly owns such a difference of Conditions, since it is so far from abolishing them, that it prescribes particular Duties to every peculiar Condition, as we shall shew more largely hereafter. (2.) It manifestly makes such a distinction, particularly with respect to *Masters* and *Servants*, who are Believers'. (3.) We read 1 Cor. 7. 21. *Art thou call'd being a Servant? Care not for it, but if thou mayst be made free, use it rather.* Now if 'tis lawful for a Man to aspire after a better State of Life, then there is a distinction of Conditions, not indeed with respect to Salvation, but upon the account of the Conveniences or Inconveniences of this Life.

The difference therefore of States being thus proved to be lawful in the Christian Religion, we add, that none of them considered in it self is more holy, or will render a Man more acceptable to God than another. This is evident from what the Scripture tells us, that nothing is of any avail with God, besides the obeying his Commands, Faith which worketh by Love, and a new Creature'. It is therefore every Man's Duty to make choice of such a State of Life, as may be most suitable not only to his *Civil*, but also to his *Spiritual* Affairs and Welfare.

But here these Cautions are necessary, (1.) That we embrace not such a State of Life as is repugnant either to *Piety*, such as is that of Conjurers, Fortune-tellers, &c. or to *Justice*, such as Pirates, Robbers, &c. or to *Chastity*, as Panders, Bawds, Whores, &c. or to *Gravity* and *Honesty*, as Buffoons, Rope-dancers, Jugglers, with the like. (2.) That we be not hasty in altering our Course of Life, and shifting from one sort to another; not but that if upon mature Deliberation

Christianity does not destroy the difference of Conditions in the Civil Life.

No State in it self more acceptable to God than another.

Cautions to be used in making choice of any State of Life.

' See to this purpose 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2. Philem. 16. 2 1 Cor. 19. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. 3 1 Cor. 7. 7, 8, 9 — 35.

we find any kind of Life inconvenient to us, we may lawfully seek out after another which shall be more convenient. (3.) That we never rashly enter into a Vow with respect to any particular State, which shall be of perpetual Obligation, especially in our Youth, before we have had sufficient experience of our own Hearts and Abilities, whether we can acquit our selves of the Vow, and persevere in it. For thereby we tempt God, and throw a Yoke upon our selves and our Liberty. (4.) That every one, in the State wherein he is, live vertuously and conformably to the Precepts of Jesus Christ, and thereby shew that a Christian Life may be led in any State whatsoever.

Now whereas there is a difference of States and Conditions, it is from hence likewise plain, that since God has allowed us a free Use of external things, a strict measure cannot be prescribed to all Christians alike, but one Man may with a safe Conscience enjoy a greater share in the Blessings of this Life than another, provided he keeps within the Bounds of Modesty, Gravity, Sobriety and Temperance. Thus for instance, 'tis lawful for the Rich to live more plentifully than the Poor, provided they do not run out into Riot and Excess, and into such Extravagances as shall render them incapable of supplying the Wants of their indigent Brethren.

The several States of a Civil Life.

These things being premised, we shall enquire into the Duties that relate to the several distinct States of Life. And here Christians may be considered with respect (1.) To their *Sex*, being either *Men* or *Women*. (2.) To their *Age*, being *Old* or *Young*. (3.) To the State and Condition of Life, wherein some are in a *single*, others in a *married* State; some are *Parents*, others *Children*; some *Masters*, others *Servants*; some *Magistrates*, others *Subjects*; some *Rich*, others *Poor*; some in *Health*, others *Sick*. According to this Distribution of the several States and Conditions of Life, we shall in the Sections of this Chapter treat of the Duties belonging to each Relation and State.

SECT

S E C T. I.

Of the Duty of Men and Women, as also of Old and Young Persons.

God has designed *Men* for the performing of great *The Duties* things, and accordingly has endued them with *Quali- of Men.* fications proper thereto; therefore, 'tis their Duty, (1.) To be courageous in the undertaking and bearing up under any hazardous Enterprizes, not to be dejected, but to shew the greatness of their Mind under these. Hence the *Greeks* call'd *Fortitude* 'ANΔPE'IA, *Manlinefs*. (2.) To moderate their Anger, lest by giving way to it they abuse their Power and Authority. (3.) Never to be over-curious in their Dress or Attire, this being the sign of a soft and effeminate Mind.

As to *Women*, their peculiar Duty is, (1.) *Shame- of Women.* facedness, in which is included *Chastity*; a Vertue becoming both Sexes, but more peculiarly ornamental to Women. From hence must be banished all Lasciviousness and Confidence, both in Looks and Language, which may give the World any umbrage to esteem them as Impudent. (2.) *Modesty*, that they presume not to do what does not belong to them, nor exercise a Superiority over their Husbands. But chiefly this Modesty is conspicuous in the Gravity and Decency of their Habits, and in their Silence in learning their Duty. With respect to their Habits or Dress in particular; tho this be a very tender point to manage, and a Man may incur the Displeasure of the *Fair Sex* by venturing upon it, yet thus much we think fit to tell them is their Duty as they are Christians. First, that they be grave and modest in their Attire, avoiding all such gaudy and wanton Dreffes, as may feed their own Pride, or draw others into Sin. Secondly, that they bestow no more Time or Cost upon them, than what is consistent with Devotion towards God, and Charity towards their Neighbour: for what Woman soever spends so much time in dressing, as to neglect her Duties of Piety; or is so expensive in her rich

rich Garbs, as to have nothing, or but very little left for Works of Charity, cannot expect to be acceptable to God, how much soever she may be cried up for a *Modish, Genteel Woman*, by a loose and luxurious Age. Thirdly, that they never affect to go beyond their Quality, for this is to confound the distinction which ought to be between the several Ranks and Orders of Persons that are in the World. We might enlarge upon these matters, but we presume every Christian Woman's Prudence and Discretion will (if she would follow it) be her best Guide, and teach her not to affect a modish Air of Pomp and Vanity on the one hand, nor to render her self ridiculous by a false Affectation of Humility on the other.

The Duties With respect to *Age*, Persons may be considered,
 1. *of those* either as they are of the same Age, or older and younger.
who are of They who are of *equal Age* ought to behave
equal Age. themselves one towards another as *Brethren*, since there is no manner of Superiority with respect to them.

Hence young *Timothy* was exhorted to *rebuke the young Men as Brethren*, 1 Tim. 5. 1.

2. *Of Aged* The Duty of *old Men* is, (1.) *Gravity*, very necessary to create and support their Authority, since they are to govern the Young, to be the Directors of their Actions, and to advise them upon every turn. (2.) *Moderating* of their Passions; for with the failure of their natural Heat, that violent Emotion of their Spirits, which too often ruffles the Minds of the younger sort, is likewise subdued; so that should they fly out into a Passion, they will lose all their Authority. (3.) They must be free from all rashness, and whatever they do must be seriously weighed with a mature Judgment. (4.) They are to instruct the younger Persons by the exemplariness of their Lives by Precepts, and sometimes advising them in any difficult case.

3. *Of young* As to *young Persons*, their Duty is, (1.) With respect to themselves, never to put off the Practice of a Christian Life to old Age, since Futurity is uncertain.

the means of Conversion will be rendered difficult, and 'tis very unbecoming to consecrate the Flower of their Age to the Devil and Sin, and the very Dregs of it to God. (2.) With respect to their Elders, they should be modest to, and reverence them, obey and do them all the Service they can. (3.) Lastly, They ought to fly youthful Lusts, and avoid that Fool-hardiness, whereby too many unadvisedly undertake things of the highest moment, and fly out into a Passion if they are told of their Faults.

S E C T. II.

Of the Duties of Persons in a Single State.

Celibacy, or a *Single Life*, as it has Inconveniences, *Celibacy a thing in-* so likewise its Conveniences: However, 'tis of the nature of those things that are *Indifferent*, which of themselves do not recommend a Man to God; but according to the Variety of Circumstances, is either to be chosen, when a Man is thereby the more dispos'd, or less averse to things tending to Salvation; or to be rejected, when he is afraid that thereby he shall by the heat of his Lusts be drawn aside from the Practice of Piety. This we thought fit to observe in opposition to the *Romanists*, who esteem *Celibacy*, consider'd in it self, not only to be more acceptable to God than a *Married State*, but also Holy and Meritorious both of Eternal Life, and a higher Degree of Happiness. We own indeed, that if any one by Fasting, Watching, and fervent Prayer, brings his Body under subjection, and obtains the Gift of Continency, so that he may be the more fit for Exercises of Devotion, and for grappling with, and bearing up under the Hardships which happen in time of Persecution; we own, I say, that in such a case he does what is highly becoming a Christian, and very acceptable to God. However, *Celibacy* in its own nature does not recommend any Person to God, but only upon the account of the End for which it is cho-

sen : Nor is there any mention made in Scripture of a Single Life's being more acceptable to God, than a Married State. As for those Texts (viz. *Mat.* 19. 20. *1 Cor.* 7. 8—38. and *Rev.* 14. 4.) produc'd by the *Romanists* in favour of their Opinion, 'tis evident to all, who will be at the pains of consulting them, and comparing them with their respective Contexts, that they make nothing to the purpose for which they alledg them.

It is two-fold.

Since then *Celibacy* of it self is not more grateful to God than a *Married State*, it may not be improper to enquire what Duties are incumbent on those who are in that State, in order to render it truly acceptable to God. *Celibacy* is either *Virginity* or *Widowhood*.

The Duties of both.

The Duties of both are, (1.) To have a particular care to keep their Vessels in Chastity and Honour, for *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judg* *. (2.) If they have not the Gift of Continency, let them marry, that they be not distracted with various Lusts *. (3.) They must subdue their Bodies by Abstinence, Watching, Labour, holy Exercises, that so they may bring them under subjection to the Spirit. (4.) Since they are not distracted with the Cares of this Life, especially *Virgins*, they must bestow the more time on the Duties of Religion, and the Exercises of Devotion.

Of Widows.

As to *Widows*, it is more especially recommended to them to *trust in God, and to continue in Supplications and Prayers night and day* *, because they are deprived of all human Help and Assistance : Hence God is in Scripture stiled the *Husband of Widows*, and a Revenger of their Wrongs *. They are likewise to avoid all Luxury, and the occasion of it, Idleness, with Talkativeness, and busying themselves in other Peoples matters *.

* *Heb.* 13. 4. * *1 Cor.* 7. 9. * *1 Tim.* 5. 14. * *1 Tim.* 5. 5. * *Exod.* 22. 22, 23. *Deut.* 27. 19. *Mal.* 3. 5. * *1 Tim.* 5. 6—13.

S E C T. III.

Of Matrimony, and the Duties of Husbands
and Wives.

Matrimony is usually defin'd to be the joining together a Man and a Woman, so as to make them one *Matrimony* *its Ends*. Flesh. The Ends for which it was ordained, are these three; (1.) For the Procreation of Children, and bringing them up in the Fear of the Lord: (2.) For a Remedy against Sin, and to avoid Fornication: (3.) For the mutual Society, Help, and Comfort that the one ought to have of the other.

That *Matrimony* was ordained by God himself, appears from several Places of Scripture; and hence *Ordain'd by God*. *Marriage* is said to be *honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled*; and the Apostle foretels that false Teachers would arise who should condemn Marriage as a carnal Ordinance and unlawful.

That it is the joining together only of one Man and one Woman, is evident from the very first Institution of it, *Gen. 2. 24.* where 'tis not only said that the *Man* *lawfulness* *of it prov'd* *by several Arguments* *they two shall be one Flesh*. From hence it follows that *Polygamy*, whereby a Man has many Wives at one and the same time, is unlawful, and that for these Reasons: (1.) It is repugnant to the primitive Institution of *Matrimony*, which was made by God not only between two Persons, but with so strict a Tie of Life, as far exceeds all other Bonds of Blood and Friendship, and which could not take place but between two Persons only. (2.) It is expressly condemned by our Saviour, who tells us, That *whosoever shall put away his Wife* *for the Cause of Fornication, causeth her to commit Adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth Adultery*. The reason of this

¹ 1 Cor. 7. 2. ² Gen. 2. 18. ³ Gen. 2. 24. Mat. 19. 4, 5, 6. ⁴ 1 Cor. 7. 2, 9, 28, 38. ⁵ Heb. 13. 4. ⁶ 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. ⁷ Mat. 5. 32.

Precept is, because a Wife that is put away not for the Cause of Adultery, is still the Wife of her first Husband, since by such an unlawful Divorce the Marriage is not dissolved; therefore if she contracts a second Marriage, she has really two Husbands at once, and is guilty of Adultery. And lest any should say that *Polygamy* is here forbidden only on the Woman's side, let him consult *Mat. 19. 9.* compar'd with *Mar. 10. 11.* and *Luk. 16. 18.* where he will find the same Sentence pass'd on the Man. (3.) It is contrary to the chief End of *Matrimony*, which is a quiet and peaceable Cohabitation: Whereas a Multiplicity of Wives causes frequent Jealousies and Quarrels among them; such as happened between *Leah* and *Rachel*, *Hannah* and *Peninnah*, &c.

An Objection
on answer-
ed.

If it be here said, that many Holy Patriarchs of old had several Wives, and were never reprov'd for it; to this we answer, (1.) Supposing *Polygamy* to be forbidden by the Divine Law, no excuse can be made for it by the Example of any Persons whatsoever. (2.) If God had approved of *Polygamy*, doubtless he would have allowed of it at the Beginning of the World, for the multiplying of Mankind, but we read of none guilty thereof before *Lamech*. (3.) We are not to enquire what God permitted in antient Times, not exactly correspondent to the end of Marriage; but what he intended by the Institution thereof, and what he has prescribed to us Christians, by reducing *Matrimony* to its primitive End and Design.

Second
Marriages
not unlaw-
ful.

Besides this, there is another kind of *Polygamy*, when a Man or a Woman marries a second or third time, upon the Decease of his former Wife or her former Husband, or when they are divorced from one another for a lawful reason. *Montanus*, and with him *Tertullian*, have condemn'd it, but without any reason. For, (1.) St. Paul expressly says¹, *The Wife is bound by the Law as long as her Husband liveth; but if her Husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will.* And again the same Apostle², *I will that the younger Women* [i.e. *Widows*, mentioned in the

¹ 1 Cor. 7. 39. ² 1 Tim. 5. 14.

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former Verses] marry, bear Children, guide the House, &c. (2.) St. Paul says, that to avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife', &c. And speaking of Widows, he tells us, that if they cannot contain, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn'. Now this lustful Heat and Danger of Fornication may happen after the Decease of a first Husband or Wife, therefore upon the return of that Weakness, the same Remedy ought to be applied.

To what we have said about *second Marriages*, several Objections may be made; as first, that it savours of Carnality, and is repugnant to Modesty; that it is more spiritual and divine to be content only with a single Marriage, as the Church owns one Lord. *Ans.*

(1.) All Marriages are approved of as lawful, *Heb. 13.*

4. and there is no Prohibition of *second Marriages*.

(2.) If what is related of *Joseph* be true, that he was a *Widower* when he married the *Virgin Mary*, then God was pleased to have his own Son born in second Wedlock. (3.) Tho it were more spiritual to be content with single Marriage, yet it does not from thence follow that a second is to be condemned as carnal and unlawful. (4.) God himself says, that it is not good for Man to be alone; and this takes in those whose Wives are dead.

Again 'tis objected, That the Renewal of Marriage is a Sign of Incontinence. *Ans.* This is not always so, since there may be other Causes for a Man's *second Marriage*. Besides, he who has married several Wives, and has lived in Widowhood some years between, may be more continent than he who lives to his old Age with one single Wife.

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Lastly, 'tis urg'd, that *John 4. 18.* our Saviour says, that the Woman of *Samaria's* sixth Husband was not her Husband. *Ans.* Our Saviour does not here blame her for having been married to several Husbands successively; but because she was still bound by the Law to her former Husband, from whom she herself had got a Divorce; which was unlawful for her to do, the Right of Divorces being granted to the Men a-

Duties of Married Persons : 1. With respect to the Marriage-Contract.

lone; and consequently her Marriage with the sixth Husband whilst the fifth was living, was illegal.

The Duties incumbent on *Married Persons* relate either to the *Contract* before, or to their *cohabiting* together after Marriage. With respect to the former, these things are requisite to be observ'd: First that it be not contracted between such as are too near of kin to each other, or which come within the degrees of *Consanguinity* and *Affinity*, whether *Lineal* or *Collateral*, whose Marriage is forbidden by the Laws of God and Man. Secondly, that it be contracted between Believers, which seems to be intimated by these Words, *only in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 7. 39. This is highly reasonable upon the following accounts; for (1.) Marriages between a Believer and an Infidel are expressly forbidden by God¹. (2.) There is great danger of the Man or the Woman's being drawn aside to Idolatry by the unbelieving Wife or Husband, of which we have a notorious Instance in *Solomon*². (3.) God upon the account of such Marriages, and the Wickedness that proceeded from them, seems to have sent the Deluge upon the Old World³. (4.) The Marriage of *Esau* with the Daughters of *Heth* is blamed, not so much for his Wives being ill temper'd to *Isaac* and *Rebecca*, as for their Idolatry⁴. Thirdly, that it be contracted with the Consent of the Parents: this is a Duty which all Children owe to their Parents, but is more especially incumbent on those who are *Minors* or under Age; they being not at their own Disposal, and cannot marry without their Parents or Guardians Consent. Lastly, 'tis farther requisite that the Persons contracting should mutually consent, testifying both their Satisfaction by some external Signs. That therefore cannot be said to be a Consent, which is made by Persons who are not as yet capable of making a right use of their Reason, or which is extorted from them by Force or Fear.

After the *Marriage* is contracted, there are some Duties common both to the Man and his Wife, and

¹ Lev. 18.

² Deut. 7. 3, 4.

³ 1 Kings 11. 1, 2, &c.

⁴ Gen. 6. 2.

⁵ Gen. 27. 46.

others peculiar to the one and the other. Those that affect them both are, (1.) A special and most ardent Love, exceeding any other Love whatsoever¹. (2.) Cohabiting together, having the same House, Bed and Board. (3.) Communicating to each other of their Substance, at least so far as is requisite for the Support of themselves and Families. (4.) Educating of their Children in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord: But of this more hereafter. (5.) That they religiously keep their Matrimonial Vow, and never defile the Marriage-Bed. (6.) That they never separate, or depart from one another, but for the Cause of Adultery only.

The Duties peculiar to the *Husband* are, (1.) Love, not shewing any bitterness to the Wife by a sour Countenance, harsh and threatening Language, much less by beating her. (2.) That he live prudently with his Wife, giving Honour unto her as the weaker Vessel²; *i. e.* such Honour as is suitable to the weaker Sex, by directing her, forgiving her Infirmities, and using the highest Degree of Equity towards her. (3.) That by his honest Labour and Industry he increase and preserve the Substance of the Family.

The peculiar Duty of the Wife is Subjection and Obedience to the Husband as to the Head³. This Subjection requires, (1.) *Fear and Reverence*, whereby she takes care to do nothing that may displease her Husband, and usurps not Authority over him⁴, but rather advises than commands him, should she be more prudent than he. (2.) *Silence*; never to murmur at, or contradict her Husband, when he commands her any thing that is lawful to be done.

As for what we said, that a Man and his Wife never ought to part, or be divorc'd from one another, saving for the Cause of *Adultery* only; there may many Objections be rais'd, and Queries asked: but passing by those of less moment, we shall only reply to two notable Queries started on this point. The first is, Whether *Matrimony* may be dissolved on the account

2. Duties incumbent on both the Husband and Wife.

Peculiar to the Husband.

To the Wife.

Two Queries answered.

¹ Gen. 2. 24. Eph. 5. 28, 29, 33. Tit. 2. 4.
² 1 Pet. 3. 7.
³ Eph. 5. 22. Col. 3. 19. 1 Pet. 3. 5, 6.
⁴ Eph. 5. 33. 1 Tim. 2. 12.

of a *malicious Desertion*? So some indeed maintain, from 1 Cor. 7. 12, 13, 14, 15. and especially in such a Case, when a Wife refuses to follow her Husband that is banished for the sake of Religion, and he wants the Gift of Continency. Of this we have an Instance in the Marquis *Caracciolus*, in *Calvin's* time. But to speak my Mind freely in this matter, I answer, That so long as a Wife deserting her Husband does not violate the Marriage-Vow by Adultery, the Conjugal Knot seems not to be dissolved, nor is it lawful for him to marry again. (1.) Because the sole Cause of a Divorce is by our Saviour made to be Adultery'. (2.) Because it is not lawful for the most incontinent Man, to contract another Marriage upon the account of his Wife's sickness, and consequently not upon the account of her leaving him, this Desertion being a Dis-temper of the Mind. But say they, he wants the Gift of Continence. To this we reply, (1.) That it is very probable, a Man, who flies his Country for the sake of Religion, and the keeping a good Conscience, might by his Prayers obtain of God the Gift of Continence, so as to preserve his Chastity. (2.) He ought by frequent Fastings and Watchings to subdue and bring his Body under subjection to the Mind. (3.) Nay, he ought rather to apply himself to Physicians for Remedies against that Incontinence, than to do any thing contrary to the Divine Command.

The second Query is, What we ought to think of the Severity of some *Rigid Anabaptists*, who would have an excommunicated Person be deprived the Use of the Marriage-Bed, 'till he be reconciled and received into Communion with the Church? *Answ.* It is highly blame-worthy, and tends to the subversion of the Divine Commands. For (1.) it is manifestly contrary to the Precept of our Saviour, who makes Fornication to be the only just Cause of a Separation. (2.) By this means a great occasion is given to Impurity and Adultery. (3.) There are many Absurdities arising from such a Separation; for first, it is injoin'd to an innocent Person: and what can be more absurd than that an innocent Wife or Husband should be pu-

! Mat. 5. & 19.

nished for the Offence of a wicked Yoke-fellow? Nay, it may so happen, that such a Separation is a very grievous, nay greater Punishment to an innocent Person, than Excommunication it self. Secondly, it tends to the Subversion of all Christian Vertues and Oeconomy; for under this pretence all the Offices of Charity and Obedience may be denied. Thirdly, it is introductory to a great many Sins: for either the Person excommunicated, seeing no hopes of Reconciliation, unless upon very hard Terms, falls into Despair; or else acts the Hypocrite, by seeming to comply with the Injunctions of the Church; or else lives in perpetual Discord with his Wife, from whence at last will arise the Wickedness, Quarrels, and Irreverence of Children toward their Parents.

Nor are those rigid *Anabaptists* less to blame in another case, who condemn and punish with Excommunication, all Marriages whatsoever that are contracted with any Person that is not of their Way. But this proceeds from a preposterous Zeal, by which they suppose that there is no Christian Church in the World besides their own, wherein there is any hope of Salvation; and from gross Ignorance, whereby they run into palpable Absurdities: for they would not have those Marriages null'd, and yet they punish them with Excommunication; nor during such a Marriage will they admit of any Tokens of Repentance, or receive the Person excommunicated into their Communion. If this be not rigid and severe, contrary to Christian Charity, and the milder Rules of the Gospel, we know not what is.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Duty of Parents and Children.

The Duty of *Parents* towards their *Children* is *Duties* of summed up by the Apostle in these Words, *Ye Fathers Parents provoke not your Children to Wrath, but bring them up towards in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*. In this *their Children*.

† Ephes. 6. 4.

general Precept are comprehended these Particulars: (1.) *Nourishing*, which consists in supplying them with Food and Raiment, and other Necessaries or Conveniences of Life. (2.) *Education*, and especially instructing them in the Christian Religion, which leads to eternal Happiness, that being thorowly acquainted with it they may order their Lives according to its Precepts. (3.) *A good Example*; for *Children* being always under the Eye of their *Parents*, their *Parents* have a great Influence upon them, and by their Example whether good or bad may turn them either to the right or the wrong way: Therefore *Parents* should take care never to do even things indifferent in the presence of their *Children*, lest they assume to themselves a Liberty from thence, either of committing a Sin, or of behaving themselves unseemly. (4.) If *Children* are unruly, stubborn and refractory, then their *Parents* must reprove, rebuke, and (if occasion be) chastise them, that so they may be kept in their Duty by Awe. However, in chastising of *Children* great Care must be taken, that we never correct them in Anger and Passion, but with all the Tenderness and Compassion of a Parent, and that the Punishment be always less in proportion than the Offence; otherwise instead of amending, we shall either harden, or break the Temper of our Child, and render him mean-spirited.

Of Education in particular.

These in short are the particular Duties requir'd of *Parents* towards their *Children*; but it may not be improper to insist a little on the Obligation and Weightiness of the second, viz. *Education*, a thing so little regarded by most Persons. For how many *Parents* are there, who sweat and turmoil, and take abundance of pains for the Nourishment and adorning the Bodies of their *Children*? How many covet to leave large Possessions and Portions to their Sons and Daughters? But how few are concern'd in decking their Souls with the bright Ornaments of Vertue and Religion, and making them Heirs of eternal Happiness? But let such *neglectful Parents* remember that *Children* are a Gift and Heritage that cometh of the Lord, intrusted by him to their Care for improving and training them up in Vertue, and to his Service; and that they must give an account to him at the last Day for the Souls of their *Children*.

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Let them remember, that if they neglect to instruct their Children in Vertue and the Truths of Religion, even in their tender Years, before Vice has got too deep a Root, and is grown into a Habit, they may thank themselves for all that Trouble, Vexation and Sorrow they meet with in this World, at the sight of the Miscarriages of a rebellious Son or Daughter; and that without a severe Repentance they cannot but expect sorer Punishments in the World to come. Let them therefore, before it be too late, exert their Authority with Prudence and Caution, and instil into the Minds of their little ones the Notions of Vertue and Vice, and the difference between Good and Evil, that they may know how to embrace the one, and avoid the other. In short, let them follow Solomon's Advice; *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* For what the Poet says proves too true, viz. *Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit Odorem testa diu*; i. e. As your first seasoning of the Cask is, so it will continue.

But here it may be said (as is the Opinion of too many) that little Children are not capable of being thus instructed till they come to Years of Discretion. But let me beg leave to tell such, that they know not what they say. The truth of it is, Parents very seldom begin to instruct their Children till 'tis too late; they never try their Inclinations and Knowledg, till the one is bent, and the other amused with things of the wrong side. Do not we see little Children of three or four Years old, mimick all our Actions, listen to, and repeat all we say, and learn what is bad without any Instructor besides a wicked Example? And can we imagine that they are less capable of being taught to be vertuous with our Examples and Instructions, than they are of learning to be vicious? It is therefore a vulgar Mistake to think that Children are not fit to be instructed in Vertue and Religion, till they are come to eight or ten or twelve Years of Age; at a time when they are grown stubborn, have learned too much of the Practice of this World, and are too

fond of Vice, to be broke off from it without great Reluctancy and Outcry. We might enlarge, but let these few hints suffice.

*Duty of
Children
to their
Parents.*

The Duty of *Children* towards their *Parents* is briefly comprehended in the fifth Commandment of the Decalogue¹. Now the word *Parents* denotes not only the *Father*, but also the *Mother*; it being expressly said, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*; that no Man upon the account of the weakness of the Sex might think his Mother had nothing to do with that Honour. By *Father* and *Mother* we are likewise to understand *Grandfathers* and *Grandmothers*, and all our Ancestors in the *Line ascending*.

1. *Reverence.*

The Duty towards them is chiefly expressed by these three Acts: First, *Reverence*, which Children ought to testify, (1.) In their *Hearts*, by a sincere Love and Esteem of their Parents, as the Authors of their Life, and most immediately representing the Image of God. (2.) By *Words*, never speaking of them but with the highest Reverence. (3.) By *Deeds*, in performing all the Offices of Reverence towards them, in rising up in their Presence, standing by whilst they sit, giving them the upper hand, never interrupting them in their Discourse, never undertaking any thing of moment without consulting them, with the like.

2. *Obedience.*

Secondly, *Obedience*, which ought to be universal, without exception: thus the Apostle, *Children obey your Parents in all things*²; only with this *Proviso*, that their Commands do not clash with the Divine Precepts. For how great an Authority soever Parents have over their Children, in enjoining them things lawful or indifferent, yet should they command a Sin, they ought not to be obeyed; for the Authority of God is above that of our Parents, and no Man's Authority can discharge us from the Obedience we owe to God. This chiefly takes place, when the Parents embrace a false Religion, for then the Children must forsake it; nay, if they cannot any otherwise preserve the Peace of their own Consciences, they must rather

¹ Exod. 20. 12. Eph. 6. 1, 2, 3. ² Col. 3. 20.

3. Grati-
tude.

Thirdly, another Act of the Childrens Duty to their Parents is *Gratitude*, which requires, (1.) That they should relieve them in their Necessities, as being before brought up by them; from which Obligation no external Acts of Religion or Piety can absolve Children. (2.) That they connive at their Infirmities which old Age brings along with it, either excuse or conceal their Failings, and bear with Patience the peevishness of their Tempers, remembring what Pains and Trouble they have been at in bringing them up.

Motives to
this Duty.

That God might the more forcibly excite Children to the Observance of this Command, he has on the one hand annexed a great Promise of a long and happy Life to the Observers of it; whilst on the other, no Sin, next to that of *Idolatry*, has been more severely punished, than Irreverence and Disobedience to Parents.

S E C T. V.

Of the Duty of Masters and Servants.

The Distin-
tion be-
tween Mas-
ters and
Servants.

Tho, as we have already shewn, the Christian Religion has not taken away the Distinction between *Masters* and *Servants*, nor discharged the latter from their Service to the former upon the account of embracing Christianity: Yet it is more conformable to that Perfection of Charity recommended by the Gospel, not to detain them who believe, in Slavery, much more not to bring those who are free into Captivity. Wherefore that severe Custom of making Prisoners of War, Slaves, is very justly abolished among Christians. But to enslave those who are free and innocent Persons against their Will, and to sell them to others, or to buy them of those that have taken them in order to sell them again, is Inhuman, Barbarous, and inconsistent with that most equitable Law of Nature, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, even so do unto them.*

• Mat. 15. 4, &c.

The

The Duty of *Masters* is, not to assume to themselves, *The Duty* nor exercise an absolute Authority over their Servants, *of Masters* since they are all under one and the same Master, even Christ¹. Therefore they ought to be equitable to their Servants, (1.) In their Commands, that they be not too hard and above their Strength. (2.) In the manner of commanding, that they use not frequent Threatnings. (3.) In giving them a just and sufficient Reward for their Labour. (4.) In being moderate in their Punishments, if their Servants should offend. (5.) In taking care of them in their Sickness and old Age. But chiefly, (6.) and lastly, in seeing that they be brought up in the true Religion and the Doctrine of Piety. If they be *hired Servants*, then the Masters must pay them their just Wages, not detaining, much less defrauding them thereof².

As for *Servants*, they are either *Slaves*, who are *The Duty* Servants in the most proper sense, or *Hirelings*. The *of Ser-* former of these owe to their Masters *Honour*³, and *vants* *Obedience*, in all things not repugnant to Piety⁴; and this not only to the kind and gentle, but also to the froward⁵: They are not to answer again⁶, nor to do Eye-service, but in Simplicity and Sincerity of Heart⁷; lastly, if they can honestly, and with the Consent of their Masters obtain their Liberty, they may very justly aspire after it⁸. As to *hired Servants*, it is their Duty not to exact too much, but take a just Reward for their Pains, to perform their Labour faithfully, and not to defraud their Masters of the Work committed to them.

¹ Eph. 6. 9. Col. 4. 1. ² Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 14. 15.
Mal. 3. 5. Jam. 5. 4. ³ 1 Tim. 6. 1. ⁴ Col. 3. 22.
⁵ 1 Pet. 2. 18. ⁶ Tit. 2. 9. ⁷ Eph. 6. 6, 7. Col. 3. 22.
⁸ 1 Cor. 7. 21.

S E C T. VI.

Of the Duty of Magistrates and Subjects.

The Office of a Magistrate may be lawfully born by a Christian. Before we explain the Duties of *Magistrates*, it will be fit to resolve a famous Question that is raised by some, viz. Whether it be lawful for a Christian to take upon him the Magistracy? We being convinced by the weight of Arguments on the *Affirmative* side, do maintain, not only that it is lawful for a Christian to exercise the Office of a Magistrate, but also that none is more fit for it than him. Our Reasons for it are as follow :

Being ordained by God. In the first place 'tis to be observed, That the Office of a *Magistrate* was ordained by God himself, according to that of St. Paul ¹, *There is no Power but of God; the Powers that be, are ordained of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God.* Now 'tis very absurd to understand these Words of a bare Permission only. If then it were unlawful for a Christian to bear the Office of a Magistrate, it would be, either because it is expressly forbidden by Christ and his Apostles, or else because 'tis inconsistent with the Genius of the Christian Religion: neither of which is true.

No where forbidden in the Gospel. For first, it is so far from being forbidden, that on the contrary there are some Tokens in the New Testament, which directly prove the Office to be lawful. As for instance, (1.) 'Tis not only said to be of God, but of him only, and to be the Ordinance of God ²: and the same Apostle exhorts us to pray for Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life under them; adding this Reason, because God will have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth³. Which Words shew, that our Prayer for Kings, &c. ought to be made to the end that they might be converted to the Christian

¹ Rom. 13. 1, 2. ² Rom. 13. 1, &c. ³ 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Faith, and that so we might lead quiet and peaceable Lives under them when converted : Which End could never be obtained were Kings to lay down their Scepters, as soon as they were converted to the Faith of Christ. But (2.) We do not read that when any of the Magistracy believed in Christ, they laid down their Office. Thus *Joseph of Arimathea*, and *Nicodemus* were the Disciples of our Saviour, and yet Members of the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, for which they were never reprov'd : So again we read of the Faith and Conversion of *Cornelius* the Centurion², and of *Sergius Paul* the Proconsul³, without any mention made of laying down their Offices ; which we should certainly have heard of, had such a Renunciation been a necessary Qualification to testify the Sincerity of their Repentance.

Secondly, It is as easy to prove that the Exercise of ^{Not repug-} the Office of a *Magistrate* is not repugnant to the Ge- ^{nant to the}nius of the Christian Religion : For the whole of that ^{Genius of} Office consists in these Acts, *Legislation*, *administ* ^{Christia-}*ring* ^{nity.} of *Justice* according thereto, and the *Defence* of their Subjects ; neither of which can be proved to be contrary to the Genius of Christianity. (1.) *Not Legislation* : For since (as they whom we now oppose do own) 'tis not repugnant to the Nature of it, for a Master of a Family or a School-Master, &c. to frame Laws which he would have kept in his School and Family for Order-sake : How can it be supposed that the Legislation of a Magistrate is contrary thereto, who makes Laws for the more decent and orderly Government of the State, and that one Man may not injure another ? (2.) As to the *Administration of Justice*, it relates either to *Civil* or *Criminal* Cases : With respect to the former, since Legislation is not unlawful, neither ought the Administration of Justice according to the Laws to be reckoned unlawful, since without this the Law would be ineffectual and of no force for the preserving of Order : In *Criminal* Matters the Case is much the same, since to execute Justice by punishing the Delinquent is for the Peace and Quietness of o-

² Luke 23. 50, 51. John 7. 50. ³ Acts 10. ³ Acts 13.
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thers, and to preserve the Innocent from being injured by evil-disposed Persons. From hence likewise 'tis plain, (3.) That those Wars which are made for the Defence of their Subjects, when they are oppressed by others, are not unlawful. However, since there are many things committed in Wars (as they are now managed) which are diametrically opposite to the Laws of Christ, it becomes Christians to be very backward in undertaking of a War, and to make it their last Remedy, after all other Methods for their Protection have been tried and proved ineffectual. As for those Wars that are undertaken only for the sake of Ambition, and for the enlarging of Territories, we are not afraid wholly to condemn them as unworthy of the Christian Name.

*The Duty
of Magi-
strates.*

Having thus proved that it is lawful for a Christian to bear the Office of a Magistrate, we shall proceed to enquire into the *Duty* of Magistrates: which consists in taking care of and procuring to the utmost of their Power the Welfare, as well *Spiritual* and *Eternal*, as *Temporal* and *Civil*, of their Subjects. Hence they are usually called the Guardians of both Tables; and we are commanded to pray for Kings and all in Authority, that we may live peaceable and quiet Lives in all Godliness and Honesty.

*1. To take
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jects.*

They procure the *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Welfare of their Subjects, (1.) By instituting the Worship of the true Religion. To this purpose they must get acquainted with and have a full Knowledge of the true Religion, that so they may not establish or protect by their Authority a false Religion instead of the true one. (2.) By building of Churches, wherein the Publick Worship of Religion may be performed, and by giving Directions in all such things as tend to the Preservation and Order of the Publick Worship. (3.) But here the Magistrate must beware not to extend his Power beyond the Bounds prescribed him by God; and consequently not to force his Subjects, who are not satisfied with his Way of Worship, to join with him in the Exercise thereof: but to give those who dissent from him a free Toleration to serve God in their own way, which they think to be the best, in their private Houses. For should the Magistrate do otherwise, he would

would offer violence to the Consciences of his Subjects, and usurp a Power which belongs to God and our Saviour, to whom as our Legislator Conscience is only subject. But here 'tis to be noted that this Toleration is to be extended to those only who dissent from an established Church in mere Externals and Modes of Worship, whereas it does not seem allowable to such as worship God in an Idolatrous manner, and hold Doctrines contrary to, and destructive of the very Fundamentals of Religion.

The *Magistrate* ought to take care of the *Publick* ^{2. To promote the Publick Peace and Tranquillity.} *Peace and Tranquillity of the State*: First, by enacting just and wholesom Laws, and enforcing them by Penalties proportionable to the Offence. Secondly, by a prudent and unbiassed Administration of Justice according to the Laws, and consequently rewarding the Good and punishing the Bad. To this purpose these things are requisite. (1.) A clear Insight into the Laws, according to which he is to do Justice. (2.) A full Knowledge of the Fact which is brought before him, and all its Circumstances, else he will not apply the Laws rightly. (3.) A diligent Enquiry into the Cause, hearing both sides, and the Evidences of Witnesses, and never pronouncing Sentence till the Matter be clearly understood. (4.) To this end he had need be endued with Judgment, Prudence, Patience, and an earnest Attention of Mind. (5.) He ought to be free from all Passion, Prejudice or favouring of a Party, else he will be apt to divert the Stream of Justice, and turn it the wrong Way. (6.) And lastly, he has need of a great deal of Magnanimity, in order to pass Sentence according to his Conscience, discharging and protecting the Good and Innocent, but condemning the Guilty. Thirdly, the *Magistrate* must promote the Publick Peace, by carefully providing all those things that are necessary for the Relief his poor and miserable Subjects, and for protecting them against all outward Violence. Fourthly, he must set his Subjects a good Example, and thereby excite them to the Observance of the Law.

The Duty of Subjects is, First, *Obedience*, a Duty incumbent on all Subjects in general without exception: ^{Duty of Subjects;} *Let every Soul, says the Apostle, be subject to the higher Powers.* ^{1. Obedience.}

Powers. Which ought to be observed in opposition to the *Romanists*, who advance the *Supremacy* of the Pope over all Magistrates, and exempt all their Ecclesiasticks from the Cognizance of all Secular Power. As also in opposition to some of the *Reformed*, who attribute to their Ministers a certain Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in the Publick Churches, not at all subject to the Magistrate; and by this means they introduce a *Collaterality* of Authorities, and set up one Power within another.

The Magistrates Authority not collateral with the Ministers.

As to the latter of these, we shall more particularly refute their Opinion by observing, that there is a two-fold Power in the Church, the one *Internal* and *Spiritual*, which is exerted by the Ministry of the Word, and consists only in admonishing and denouncing the Divine Punishment against the Disobedient. This Power is only subject to God, adapted to keep them within the Bounds of their Duty, who own those Arguments and Denunciations of Punishment to be Divine. The other is *External*, relating to the outward Form of Church-Government: This is subject to the Magistrate, since Government has a regard to publick Churches or Assemblies. The reason of this is, because unless such a Power of the Magistrate be admitted, it must be supposed either that the Power of the Church is superior to that of the Magistrate, which is the *Romish* Opinion; or *Collateral*, which is very absurd. For it is inconsistent with good Order, that there should be two Supreme Powers co-ordinate with, and neither of them subject the one to the other. 'Tis the Business of Authority to oblige the Obedience of others; but two Supreme Powers collateral to one another may command things quite contrary, or very different; and then 'tis impossible to obey both. Besides, this is the direct Road to *Papery*: since from hence it would follow, that Ministers have the supreme Jurisdiction in Religious Matters next under Christ, and consequently that Magistrates are bound to follow the Judgments of their Ministers, and to give a Sanction to their Decrees; and then Subjects are not obli-

ged to obey their Magistrate in things relating to the Government of the Church, if he should command any thing contrary to the Judgment of their Ministers.

As the Duty of *Obedience* is incumbent on all Subjects, so 'tis *Universal* with respect to all the Commands of the Magistrate without exception, unless he commands us any thing repugnant to Vertue, and the Peace of a good Conscience. But for a further Illustration of this Matter, 'tis proper to treat more distinctly of the Duty of *Subjects*, agreeably to what was said of the Duty of Magistrates.

We observ'd that it was the Duty of *Magistrates* to take care of the *Spiritual* and *Temporal* Welfare of their Subjects. As to the *Spiritual* Welfare, they ought to erect Churches, and take care of all those things that are necessary for the due and pure Worshipping of God. Accordingly it is the Duty of every Subject, who owns that Religion which is established by the Publick Authority of his Prince, to be true and saving, or desires to be a Member of it, to conform himself to the Laws of the Magistrate. But because Religion has a relation to God, and binds the Conscience, over which none but he has Authority; if a Magistrate establish any publick Religion by his Authority in a Country over which he is Prince, he has no Authority of prescribing it imperiously to his Subjects, but only of recommending it to them by proper Ministers: and consequently if any of his Subjects cannot conform to it, either as maintaining Errors destructive of Piety and Eternal Salvation, as necessary; or requiring some Actions forbidden by the Divine Law, or persecuting those who dissent from it; such, I say, cannot be forced by the Magistrate to the Profession of such a Religion. And if the Magistrate should use Threats and Violence, then Obedience is ingenuously, but modestly to be denied him.

If it be asked, What shall Subjects do then in such a Case? To this I answer, that they must not seize upon publick Churches, which belong not to private Persons, but to Princes, since this would be seditious: But they must exercise that Religion (which they look upon to be true and saving) modestly in their own Houses

We must obey in all things not contrary to a good Conscience.

How far Obedience is to be paid to Magistrates in Religious Matters.

Queries answered.

Houſes and private Meetings; but in other things which they can do with a good Conſcience, a ready Obedience muſt be paid to the Magiſtrates.

Again it may be ſaid; What if the Magiſtrate ſhould under ſevere Penalties forbid ſuch ſeparate Aſſemblies, and be ſtrict in puniſhing thoſe who diſobey his Orders? *Anſw.* The Subjects muſt in a modeſt, humble and decent way petition the Magiſtrate to repeal his Edicts, to grant them the liberty of exerciſing their Religion, and not to offer Violence to their Conſciences. But ſhould he prove inexorable, then that which God commands muſt not be omitted for the Fear of Men; but they muſt pray God either to ſoften the Heart of the Magiſtrate, or to grant the Faithful Patience and Conſtancy of Mind.

Laſtly, it may be aſk'd, What if a Prince ſhould turn *Tyrant*, and force his Subjects to *Idolatry*? Is it not lawful to oppoſe ſuch a Magiſtrate by force of Arms? *Anſw.* This Point has been long controverted, and that with too much heat; ſome maintaining the Negative, ſome the Affirmative: the former pretend that ſuch Oppoſition is Rebellion, and contrary to the New Teſtament, which forbids Reſiſtance of the Supreme Powers; while the latter, pretending to Reaſon and Natural Right, aſſert, that if any Prince uſes an Arbitrary Power contrary to the Original Conſtitution of the Country, and the Laws by which he ought to govern, theſe Laws lay a Reſtraint upon him, and juſtify his Subjects in oppoſing his unwarrantable Practices.

*How far
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As to other things relating only to the Civil Peace and Welfare, the Magiſtracy muſt be obey'd, tho it ſhould command what ſeems hard and grievous. Thus we muſt ſubmit to the Sentence of a Judge, how unjuſt ſoever it may appear to us. But this chiefly takes place in paying of Cuſtoms and Taxes, which are not to be denied when once they are exacted, nay tho they ſhould be the draining of the Subject. They may indeed remove from ſuch a Country, and ſettle elſewhere; but ſo long as they live under the Dominions of ſuch a Prince, they muſt pay Taxes without Reluctance. If they are overburdenſom, the Subjects may petition the Magiſtrate

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Magistrate to remit part; but if he be inflexible, they must not rebel against him, nor excite others to do so.

A second Duty of the *Subject* to the *Magistrate* is ^{2. Fear.} *Fear*, viz. that whereby he is afraid of the Magistrate, who bears not the Sword in vain, but is an Avenger of them that do evil, and thereby is restrained from the Transgression of the Laws.

The third is *Honour*, which comprehends under it ^{3. Honour.} all the Signs of Reverence, and requires that we should never speak of them but with respect; and especially that we should pray to God privately and publicly for them, as for the common Parents of our Country: and this not only for the Good and Gentle, but also for the Bad and Cruel, since the Welfare of their Subjects is wrap'd up in theirs.

Contrary to this *Honour* is, (1.) passing a rash Censure on their Administration, which is inconsistent with that *Candor* that is due to all Men, especially to those who have Authority over us; and with *Moderation*, which teaches us to bear with small Failings, and pass them by for the Good of the Publick. (2.) The speaking evil of them, calumniating and misrepresenting their Actions; whereas on the contrary 'tis the Subject's Duty to conceal their Miscarriages, or admonish them privately. (3.) Rebelling and conspiring against their Person and Government, as *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* against *Moses* and *Aaron*, and *Abalom* against his Father *David*; but chiefly laying violent hands upon and assassinating them, which is the highest disrespect that can be offer'd to them. *The Opposites to Honour.*

S E C T. VII.

The Duty of the Rich and Poor.

Before we enter upon the Duties between the *Rich* and *Poor*, we shall premise some things concerning *Riches* and *Poverty*; by which it will appear how far

Num. 16. 2 Sam. 15.

these States are suitable to Christians.

Riches useful but dangerous Blessings.

Riches consider'd absolutely and in themselves are of the nature of things *Indifferent*, which a Man may either abuse, or make a right use of to the Glory of God. However, since in their own nature they are appointed for a good Use, and may procure us several Conveniences of this Life, hence it is, that they are reckon'd as useful and Divine Blessings *. So that if they fall to the share of a good and prudent Man, they may prove the Instruments of several Vertues, such as Liberality, Continency, Modesty, Gratitude towards God, with the like. But upon the account of human Infirmary, the Possession of them is too often attended with great Danger, and as great Temptations. Hence it is that they are compared to Thorns choaking the good Seed *; to a Snare whereinto they who would be rich do fall *; and the rich Man is said to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven with great Difficulty *.

Poverty either Pretended,

As for *Poverty*, 'tis either *pretended* or *real*. *Pretended Poverty* is when a Man feigns himself to be poor, when he is really rich. / Of this nature is the Poverty of most of the Monks, who in their Words and Habit profess *Poverty*, whilst they are in possession of great Estates. This Poverty is criminal, (1.) Because 'tis Ingratitude towards God, whose Blessing is thereby disown'd. (2.) It is an Injury to Men; because under the pretence of Poverty they deny others that Relief which is their due; and by their Exemptions overcharge others with Taxes.

Or Real.

This again either voluntary, such as the Monks pretend to;

Real Poverty is either directly sought after, or necessary. The former is *voluntary*, and is such a State of Life as is embrac'd without any necessity for so doing. Of this nature some *Mendicant Friars* pretend their *Poverty* to be, because they have no Lands or Possessions, but live upon what they daily beg. However this is not *real Poverty*, nor so perfect a State and meritorious as the *Romanists* would have it. For (1.) it is no more than a *feigned Poverty*, since these Monks

* Deut. 30. 8, 9. Job 1. 10. & 42. 12. Prov. 10. 22. Mat. 13. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9. Mat. 19. 23.

know and are assured that they shall be sufficiently provided for every day; hence they live idly, enjoy the Fruits of other Mens Labours, and without any trouble possess their common Stock. (2.) Supposing it to be *real Poverty*, yet we say that it is a thing *Indifferent* as well as Riches, and consequently a Man may use it for the exercising of his Vertue, or abuse it by his wicked Contrivances. (3.) It is a great tempting of God; for *Poverty* consider'd in it self is a miserable State, and such as is to be avoided upon the account of the many Inconveniences which it brings along with it, and which Men too often find themselves incapable of bearing. (4.) A Man thereby renders himself incapable of discharging many Offices, which those who have Estates owe to their Neighbour. (5.) And lastly, to throw away an Estate without any reason, is the Sign of a weak Mind; 'tis like cutting off a Hand, or plucking out an Eye for fear of abusing them. Upon the whole matter, should any one part with his Riches, that being loose from the Cares of this World he may be more at leisure to serve God, he does a thing which is good, not in it self, but for the sake of the End he designs.

Poverty out of *Necessity*, and not sought after, or *Or necessity* brought upon a Man through his own fault, is commonly attended with some Defect and Infirmary, by which the poor Man is incapable of maintaining himself by his Labour. This is a Misfortune either hereditary, when one is born of poor Parents; or sometimes sent by God on good Men for a Chastisement of their Sins, or for the Trial of their Faith and Constancy, or sometimes for both these Ends. This has nothing criminal in it, tho it be the most miserable Condition of Life, but is a thing indifferent, which Men may use to the Glory of God, or else abuse to their own Destruction.

Having premis'd thus much, we proceed first to the *Duties of Duties* incumbent on the *Rich*, which are (1.) That the *Rich* they be not puffed up nor vaunt themselves in their Riches, nor despise the Poor upon that account. (2.)

1 Tim. 6. 17. Prov. 17. 5. Jam. 2. 3, 4.

That they put not their Trust in their Riches, since they are uncertain¹; and cannot prolong a Man's Life²; but in the *Living God*, who is permanent and eternal, and consequently able to bestow upon us all things richly to enjoy. (3.) That they abuse not their Riches to Luxury, like the rich Glutton in the Gospel, who clothed himself in Purple and fine Linen, and far'd sumptuously every day³. (4.) That they be charitable to the Poor, remembring that they are not *Proprietors*, but only *Stewards* of the Substance they possess. (5.) That they imploy their Riches to the Glory of God in pious Uses, and for the Promotion of true Religion.

*Duties of
the Poor.*

The *poor Man's* Duty is, (1.) To get a Livelihood for himself by honest Industry and Labour. (2.) Not to distrust God if he should think fit not to bless his honest Labour, nor to murmur against Divine Providence, but to rest satisfied that God has just, wise, and good Reasons for what he does. (3.) Not to envy the Rich, as if God had not taken the same care for him; not to be too much dejected tho the Rich should despise him, but rather *glory at their Exaltation*⁴. Since with respect to everlasting Salvation he is upon the same level with them, nay is more fit for the seeking after it, having none of those Fetters and Clogs whereby the Rich are frequently fastned down to this Earth. (4.) Not to believe that the Rich, because they are only Stewards of the Riches intrusted to them, are his Debtors, and that he owes them no Thanks for what they give him; but rather to be grateful to them, as the faithful Dispensers of God's Gifts. (5.) Not to pretend to be more poor than he is, thereby to get the larger Alms from the Rich, for this is a cheat; nor to abuse their Alms to Intemperance, since he will thereby find no relief to his Poverty, but will soon fall into the same Straits again.

¹ Luk. 12. 17, 18.

² *Ibid.* ver. 15.

³ Luk. 16. 19.

⁴ James 1. 9.

S E C T. VIII.

The Duty of those who are Healthful and Sick.

It is the peculiar Duty of those who are in *Health* Reasons for Men in Health not to put off their Repentance till Sick-ness comes. not to put off their Repentance and a Holy Life to the time of Sicknes, and that for these following Reasons. (1.) Because they are uncertain whether they may not be snatch'd away by sudden Death. (2.) Because 'tis possible they may be seiz'd with such a Distemper as shall take away all the use of their Understanding; in both which cases they unavoidably die in their Sins without any Repentance, to the utmost hazard of their Eternal Salvation. (3.) Because 'tis scarce likely, that a Man hardned in evil thro a long Custom of sinning, can be able to repent sincerely and seriously at the Hour of Death. For if it were difficult to live holily before Sin had taken deep root, what hope is there of shaking off the Yoke of Sin, when it has sat so long upon him? When we are sick, we are incapable of learning any Art: and do we believe that we shall be able to learn the noblest, the most difficult Art, the Art of dying well, just as the Breath is going out of our Bodies, when we wilfully neglected it whilst in our Health and Vigor? (4.) And lastly, 'tis uncertain whether God will accept of this late Repentance for a true, sincere and saving Repentance. Certain it is, that it wants all those Signs and Fruits of a genuine Repentance requir'd in the Gospel, and 'tis owing to the Mercy and Goodness of God if a Death-bed Repentance be available to Salvation.

But it is usually objected, that *Mat. 20. 9.* they Objections answered. who were called at the *Eleventh Hour* received an equal Reward with those that were called at the *First*. *Ans.* They who being called at the first Hour will not obey the Voice of God, and at last prepare themselves for working at the *Eleventh Hour* (of which kind are all Christians who put off their Repentance to the end of their Lives) can by no means be compar'd with the Labourers that were called at the *eleventh Hour*; but are like those of whom God complains,

plains¹; *I have spread out my hands all the Day to a rebellious People, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own Thoughts.*

The Case of the Penitent Thief consider'd at large. Again 'tis urged, that our Saviour promis'd the *Penitent Thief* upon the Cross, *Luke 23. 43.* That he should be with him that day in Paradise. *Ans^w.* There is nothing in this Instance on which such Procrastinators of their Repentance may rely with Safety. (1.) 'Tis uncertain whether the Thief repented this last day or no; it rather seems probable that he was before convinc'd of his Sins by the Doctrine and Miracles of Christ, and laid hold on this occasion of openly testifying his Repentance. (2.) Supposing he were converted at that time, yet we are uncertain whether or no he had an occasion offered him before of repenting, or whether this was the first day that the saving Grace of God appeared to him. What then has this Instance to do with those who have despis'd the Grace of God, after it has been a long time offered unto them? (3.) The *Penitent Thief's* Faith was extraordinary, the like to which cannot be met with again in the whole World. 'Tis one thing to believe in Christ rais'd from the Dead, exalted at the right Hand of God in Heaven, and made Lord and Head over all; and another to believe in him, as a Blasphemer, condemn'd and nail'd to the Cross. The Apostles had forsaken him, *Peter* had denied him thrice, and yet the Thief owns him to be the King of Heaven. Is it then any wonder that an extraordinary degree of Grace should be bestow'd on such an extraordinary Faith? (4.) And lastly, suppose all Circumstances to be like, yet we are not to depend upon some extraordinary Examples, but on the clear Precepts and Promises of God, in which the Condition of the New Covenant is contain'd: therefore since there is no such Promise made of Eternal Life to those who repent at the last Hour, it is a very dangerous and presumptuous thing to lay any stress upon this single and extraordinary Instance of the *Penitent Thief*.

¹ Isa. 65. 2.

The Duty of the *Sick* is (according to St. James, *The Duty of the Sick* Ch. 5. 14, 15.) to have recourse unto God by Prayer, and to desire the Prayers of others, especially the Elders of the Church. Therefore they are mightily to blame, who instead of sending for the Physician of the Soul before, or at the same time when they send for the Physician of the Body, either never send for him at all, or when 'tis too late, and the Patient is given over by the Doctor; then the Minister is called to administer as it were *Church-Opium*, to send him quietly and without distraction into the other World. But alas! what a gross, tho too common a Failing is this?

But for the more distinct Explication of the Duties incumbent on the *Sick*, 'tis to be noted, that there is a very great difference of Duties, according as a Man has lived: for either he has been truly pious, and one that fears God; or else not altogether pious, nor downright impious; or else he has been notoriously profane and wicked.

A Christian then as soon as he falls *sick*, in order to know the state of his Soul, ought seriously and as in the Presence of God, to examine his own Heart, especially in these two Particulars: (1.) Whether he has endeavour'd to inform his Conscience aright in the Knowledg of the Divine Will, by a constant reading and meditating upon the Scripture. (2.) Whether he has lived according to the Dictates of a well-informed Conscience, so as to have done nothing with which his Conscience might reproach him; whether he has endeavour'd seriously and to the utmost of his power to amend and conquer his Imperfections and Infirmities; and whether he can by the Testimony of his Conscience assure himself of the Favour of God, in whose Ways he has studied to walk with an upright Heart.

If after such an Examination, the *sick* Man finds that he has heartily endeavour'd after *true Piety*, he has matter of real Consolation. For tho we have always occasion to pray, *Forgive us our Trespases*, and to say with St. Paul, *I know nothing by my self*, yet

The truly Pious have cause of rejoicing.

am I not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord: Yet we may also say with St. John¹, If our Heart condemns us not, then we have Confidence towards God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

Their Duty Now the Duty of such sick Persons, in the first place, is, 1. *Patience*.

is, to bear with *Patience* whatsoever God is pleased to lay upon them: For whether they look upon the *Efficient* or the *Moving Cause*, they have great reason to testify their *Patience*. For (1.) they know the *Efficient Cause* to be God, who by his absolute Authority can take away *Health*, from whom and when he pleaseth; nay, tho he had promised that he would not take it away, yet for the good of his Servants he might do it. For all the Promises of this Life are to be understood in the New Testament, with this Limitation, *Provided the obtaining of them be not prejudicial to our everlasting Salvation*. So that when God is pleased to afflict good Men with Sicknefs, 'tis either to prove their *Patience*, and render it exemplary to others; or to guard them against falling into Sin, or to teach them how weak and frail this Life is, or to shew them the Vanity of all things here below, or lastly to inform them that their Lives must one day end, it being appointed for all Men once to die²: Of which Death Diseases are the Forerunners. (2.) If they look upon the *Moving* or *inciting Cause*, 'tis either the Will of God, or their own Sins. If the former, that always tends to our Salvation; and there is sufficient Ground to testify our *Patience*, by thus submitting to the supreme Lord of all things, whose we entirely are; whereas not to acquiesce in his Will, is at it were pretending to limit and set Bounds to it. If their Sins be the Cause, if they know them to be remitted, as I suppose they do (for 'tis only of the true Believers that we here speak) they receive Sicknefs at the hand of God as the Divine Correction, and consequently as Signs of the Divine Favour.

An Objection answered.

But here it may be objected, that these Men are often afflicted with many and durable Pains. *Answer*,

¹ 1 John 3. 21, 22. ² Heb. 9. 27.

Granting this, yet they are never above their Strength. For (1.) If they be acute, God will shorten them; and if lasting, he will alleviate them. (2.) In their very Pains, the Spirit prays and intercedes for them. (3.) They are supported with an assured Hope of Glory, with which those Pains are not worthy to be compared. (4.) The reflecting upon a past well-spent Life is a very great Encouragement to them to bear up with Patience. (5.) And lastly, they may be excited thereto by the Examples of those holy Men of old, who suffered more grievous Afflictions and Pains than they can do.

A second Duty of such *sick* Persons is to have their 2. *Prayer*. Recourse unto God by *Prayer*, to ask him Pardon for their Offences, and a Deliverance from their Distempers and Pains.

In the third and last place, their Duty is to make use of this Divine Correction or Trial for the amendment of their own Lives, and the greater Confirmation of their Faith and Piety. *3. Amendment of Life.*

But if they perceive that 'tis God's Will they should die, then 'tis their Duty to prepare for Death: for which 'tis requisite, first, that they implore of God the Pardon of all their Sins, to which our Human Infirmary easily exposes us; and that he would be pleased to be present with them to the end by the Influence of his Grace, and the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, that so tho' their outward Man may decay, yet their inward Man may be renewed day by day. *Duties of Persons in a dying State; 1. To ask Pardon for their own Sins.*

Secondly, they ought heartily to forgive others all their Offences, considering what and how much God does forgive them, in order to their Salvation. Thus our Lord, and after his Example the *Protomartyr St. Stephen*, prayed for the Forgiveness of their Murderers. *2. To pardon others.*

Thirdly, they ought calmly and freely to compose themselves to die, submitting cheerfully to the Divine Will, and that for the following Reasons: (1.) Because Death is a Debt we all owe to Nature. (2.) Because they are removed from this Vale of Tears, taken away from seeing or feeling the Wrath to come; and especially if they be Righteous Souls, will be freed from *3. To compose themselves to die.*

1 Rom. 8. 26, 27.

2 Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18.

those many and great dangers to which our Lives are exposed. (3.) Because they rest from all their Labours, from that Conflict they had against Sin and the Devil, and shall be freed from all Fears of Temptation. (4.) Because they are only Strangers and Pilgrims whilst they live in this World, being at a distance from their own Homes. (5.) Because they are supported by the Hopes of a blessed Resurrection, so that they do not look upon Death as an Evil, nor as the end of Life, but as a quiet Sleep, from whence their Bodies shall be raised at the last Day to Glory, and as the Entrance and Passage of their Souls to a better State.

4. To com-
mit the
Care of
their Fa-
milies to
God.

Fourthly, another Duty of dying Persons is to commit the Care of their Familys, of their Wives and Children to the Providence of God, who is a Father to the Fatherless, and a Husband to the Widow. Why then should any Man be perplex'd at the Thoughts of dying, upon the account of his Family which he leaves behind him, since God is better able to provide for them, than all Human Care and Industry can pretend to? However this they ought to do upon their Death-Beds, viz. to settle their Estates, if they have any, and have not been so wise as to have settled them before; and to exhort their Family to Piety and mutual Love, especially considering that the Speeches of dying Persons carry a great weight with them.

5. To com-
mend their
Souls to
God.

Fifthly and lastly, upon the Hopes of a blessed Resurrection, they ought to recommend their Souls to God, as to a faithful Creator and merciful Redeemer, to be kept by him till the Day of the Resurrection, when they shall be again united to their Bodies.

The Duty
of sick Per-
sons who
have not
lived well,
is to throw
themselves
wholly upon
the Mercy
of God.

But the Duties of a sick Person, who has either led a wicked Life, or a Life not altogether conformable to the Christian Profession, are of another sort. Such a one has not any Subject of rejoicing, but of grieving, and that so much the more, by how much he has deviated from true Piety, since he cannot apply the Promises of Salvation to himself. However he is by no means to despair, since the Mercies of God are infinite, and incomprehensible, and such as sometimes grant Pardon extraordinarily, tho it be not included within the Terms of the New Covenant. To the boundless Mercy of God must he then fly, on this

must

must he wholly throw himself, and on this must he wholly depend. That he may therefore be Partaker thereof, and attain some Comfort at his last Hours, he must do whatever his Condition can allow him to do, and what his Sickness, as the Divine Monitor, invites him to. He may then, and must do these two things. First, he must be heartily sorry that he has not endeavoured to please God more, whilst he had his Health, Opportunity, Teachers and Advisers, to prompt him to it. Secondly, he must make a holy, sincere and stedfast Resolution (as in the Presence of God who will ere long call him to an account) of changing the whole Course of his Life, if it has been altogether wicked, or of amending the Vices to which he has been accustomed, and weaning his Mind wholly from the Love of this World, in order the more readily and freely to follow after Heavenly things, if it pleases God to spare his Life and restore him to his Health. But to make this Resolution the more sacred and lasting, let him remember, (1.) To whom he makes it, *viz.* God, the Searcher of the Hearts and Reins, and who will not be mocked, (2.) What he vows, *viz.* a very hard and difficult Performance; since 'tis the part of a great and excellent Vertue, to be able to conquer ones self with the Affections and Lusts, especially when a Man has been hardened through a long Custom of sinning. (3.) Let him remember at what time he makes the Resolution, *viz.* when he thinks that Death is making his Approaches, and the dreadful Judgment of God is hanging over his Head. He must enquire therefore seriously, whether this Grief be not rather the Terror of a guilty Conscience, which is afraid of the angry Judge, than a Godly Sorrow, detesting of Sin as ungrateful to God and the Cause of Destruction, which *worketh Repentance unto Life, not to be repented of.*

Having thorowly weighed and examined these things, he must by serious and fervent Prayer to God have recourse to his extraordinary Grace, implore Assistance from it alone, and this with all the Assiduity that his Distemper will admit. However he must do all those things, which one in his Condition is capable of doing. As, (1.) He must desire the Prayers of all the

Faithful. (2.) He must promise an amendment of Life if he should recover, and endeavour after the restoring of his Health only for that end. (3.) In the mean time he must testify this his Resolution, by all imaginable Methods, in case God should not think fit to restore him to his Health: As by a Desire of hearing the Word of God, by Works of Charity, giving Alms to the Poor, if he be rich; forgiving of Injuries offered to himself, asking Pardon of others whom he may have injured, and patiently enduring all the Pains God is pleased to inflict upon him, being sensible that he deserves to endure sorer and more grievous Punishments.

C H A P. XXI.

Of the Ceremonial Precepts of Christ, and of the Sacraments in general.

*Ceremonies
instituted
by Christ.*

Hitherto we have treated of the Vertues of *Morality*, wherein the Holiness of a Christian Life consists; 'tis necessary to say something concerning the Ceremonies which our Saviour has annexed to the *Moral* Precepts. For tho the Worship prescribed us in the New Testament be *Spiritual*, in opposition to the *External Ritual* Worship enjoined by the Law; yet it has pleased God to institute some few *Ceremonies*, whereby the Faithful on their part (as by some visible Signs) should be obliged to the Worship and Service of God; and God on his part should as it were under a Seal consign over to them his Grace and Promises: and thus they are like Signs of the Mutual Contract betwixt God and Men.

*Commonly
called Sa-
craments,
of which
three
things con-
siderable.*

These *Rites* are commonly called *Sacraments*, a Word of long Usage in the Christian Church, tho unknown to the Writers of the Holy Scripture. This Word, tho it may be taken in a sound and proper Meaning, yet has given occasion to many Disputes, and has by degrees been made use of for the introducing of Superstition and Idolatry. For in process of

of time, Disputes have been raised about the *Matter* and *Form* of those Sacraments, about the *Efficacy* of them, about the *Person* administering them, about the Agreement and Disagreement between the *Sacraments* of the Old and New Covenant; with the like. But passing by all Controversies about the Word, we shall confine what we have to say concerning the *Sacraments* to these three Heads. First, we shall treat of their *Origin*, and the *Cause* of their Institution. Secondly, of their *Nature*, viz. their *Matter* and *Form*. And Thirdly, of their *Efficacy*.

Sacraments, as we said before, are as it were Signs ^{1. Their} and Seals of the Covenant betwixt God and Men. ^{Origin.}

In order therefore to enquire into the Original of them, it must be noted, that in Covenants made between Man and Man, some Ceremonies were commonly used with solemn Words. Thus *Polybius* tells us, that the *Fecialis*, or Herald at Arms, among the *Romans*, taking up a Stone in his Hand, wishes, that as that Stone falls out of his Hands, so may he perish, if he acts fraudulently or treacherously in the Covenant he makes. So likewise *Abraham* ratifies the Covenant betwixt God and him, by cutting the Sacrifices in two. Again, the Parties who make a Contract, are used to convey the Writings of the Covenant to each other under their mutual Hands and Seals. Just after the same manner does God seem to act in his Covenants. The *New Covenant* made in *Jesus Christ* (to say nothing of the rest) consists in the Promise of Faith, Obedience, and Amendment of Life on Man's part; and on God's, the Promise of Grace sufficient to enable Men to obey, and upon the right use of this Grace, Remission of Sins, Resurrection from the Dead, and Eternal Life. Now in condescension to Human Infirmary, God was pleased to imitate as it were the Custom used in Human Covenants; that is, he has instituted certain *Rites*, as visible Signs, whereby Men should be assured of the Conditions of the Covenant.

The *Matter* of the *Sacrament* is some sensible thing; ^{2. Their} for the *Sacraments* are as it were the Pledges by which ^{Matter} and ^{Form.}

¹ Gen. 15. 10.

God assures us of the Performance of his Promises. But whereas the Blessings promised by God, and apprehended by Faith, are things invisible, 'tis requisite that those Pledges by which God would shadow out to us his Promises for the greater Confirmation of our Faith, should be visible things, especially considering that Human Nature is so frail, as not to be able to apprehend many things, but by the intervention of the Senses. As to the *Form of Sacraments*, it consists in a *significative Force* or Virtue; for tho there should be some *Natural Analogy* between the Sign and the thing signified, yet it is inconstant and undetermined, and could never signify that thing, unless God had ordered that this Sign should have such or such a Signification. Now the Signs of the *Sacraments* are either *Commemorative*, which bring some past thing to our Memory, as in the *Lord's-Supper*; or *Significative*, to denote some future or present, but spiritual and invisible thing, as in *Baptism*; or *Obfignatory*, which seal to us either something given, or to be given by God, and testify the Duty we have or ought to perform on our part: of which nature are both Sacraments.

3. *Their Efficacy.*
The Romanists Opinion about it refuted.

As to the *Efficacy* of the *Sacraments*, there is a Controversy betwixt *Papists* and *Protestants* about it. The *Romanists* maintain, that the *Sacraments* confer Grace *ex Opere operato*, i. e. by virtue of the Sacramental Action instituted by God to that purpose, and not for any Merit of the Actor and Receiver. So that the Will, Faith and Repentance, are indeed necessarily required in an Adult Person who receives, as Qualifications upon the account of the Subject, but not as active Causes: For according to them, neither Faith nor Repentance make up the Sacramental Grace, nor add any Efficacy to the Sacrament, but only remove such Obstacles, as would hinder the Sacraments from having their Efficacy. [See to this purpose *Bellarmin, Lib. 2. de Sacrament. Cap. 1. and 8.*] But how absurd, and contrary to Scripture this Opinion is, will appear if we consider, (1.) That from hence it will follow, that the *Sacraments* as Instruments, work Justification in us by their own immediate Energy; whereas the Scriptures never attribute this to the *Sacraments*, but always to Faith and Holiness of Life; and this not as

the

the *Meritorious*, but as the *Conditional Cause*, upon which God works it in us. (2.) That the Sacraments might then be administred to unintelligent Beings, which *Bellarmino* grants, nay urges by saying, That Infants, nay deaf, mad, and sleeping Persons are duly baptized: and they might likewise be administred to things inanimate, as is confirmed by the Practice of the *Romish Church*, in consecrating and baptizing of Bells. As for *Infant-Baptism*, we shall treat of that hereafter. What he adds concerning Madmen and Persons in Sleep, is very foolish; and the baptizing of Bells and other inanimate things, is ridiculous and profane. (3.) It is impossible that the Sacraments, which are gross and material things, should reach the Heart, and there in a Moment work a Divine and Supernatural Vertue; nor is it conceivable, of what nature this *Sacramental Energy* is, or in what part thereof it resides, or when it operates. (4.) It would from thence follow, that all they who through no fault of their own are deprived of the Benefit of the Sacraments (as Infants dying unbaptized, or Adult Believers living among Infidels) would be for ever damned, as not being justified; which is very absurd and unreasonable to assert.

But to this they urge several Objections out of Scripture, the chief of which we will fairly state, and briefly answer. In the first place then they urge the Words of our Saviour, Mar. 16. 16. *He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.* Faith therefore, say they, is not sufficient to Salvation, unless *Baptism* be also applied. *Ans.* From the Words that follow, it appears that Baptism is not of equal necessity with Faith; for 'tis added, *But he that believeth not shall be damned,* without the least mention made of the Omission of Baptism. Now the reason why Baptism is annexed to Faith, is not because by the reception thereof any Spiritual Grace is wrought in Man, or that he is regenerated thereby; but because 'tis our Duty to testify our Faith by the receiving of Baptism, according to the Divine Command: so that Baptism denotes the external Profession of our Faith, declared by that Rite as a solemn and conspicuous Sign.

Objections answered.

Again

Again they say, that *Tir. 3. 5. Baptism* is called the *Washing, or Laver of Regeneration*. *Answ.* (1.) Supposing that the Apostle had here a regard to *Baptism*, yet it would not from thence follow, that *Baptism* wrought Regeneration in us: but it would be only a figurative Expression, whereby the thing signified is put for the Sign, upon the account of that strict Connection that is betwixt them both. *Baptism* therefore in this Sense might be called the *Laver of Regeneration*, because Regeneration is shadowed out to us by the Washing of *Baptism*. (2.) We say that the Apostle does not here speak of *Baptism*, but of Regeneration it self. The Laver therefore of Regeneration denotes Regeneration it self, just as the Crown of Glory, the Crown of Life, &c. is called Life and Glory, which as a Crown shall be bestowed on the Faithful at the last Day.

Lastly, they object that *Acts 2. 38.* 'tis said, *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins:* parallel to which is *Acts 22. 16.* In both which Places, say they, Remission and Washing away of Sins is ascribed to *Baptism*. *Answ.* This is not because *Baptism* is the Instrument whereby God grants Remission of Sins; but because Men testify their Faith and Repentance by *Baptism*, that they may obtain Remission of Sins. For this depends merely on the good Pleasure of God who pardons; and cannot be ascribed to any external Ceremony, unless as it is an external Sign shadowing out to us that Remission. *Be baptized therefore for the Remission of Sins,* is as much as to say, Receive ye *Baptism* whereby God seals this Remission to you: and be ye assured that by Repentance and Faith in Jesus Christ, you will as certainly obtain Remission of Sins, as your Bodies are washed with Water.

The Opini-
on of the
Contra-
Remon-
strants con-
sidered.

As to the *Contra-Remonstrants*, who reject the *Romanists* Opinion, they are so intricate in the proposing of their own, that one cannot apprehend distinctly what they mean by it. They tell us, " That the Sacraments are external visible Signs, which by the Appointment of God not only signify, but also exhibit and seal to us the Divine Promises, and this after a *Relative, Sacramental and Spiritual Manner,*" by

“ by which the things themselves are really exhibited and sealed to the Faithful.” Now (1.) 'Tis here unconceivable, how this *Relative, Sacramental, Spiritual Mode* is distinct from the Signification, whether *Physical*, as is that of the Signs which *Bellarmino* calls *Practical*; or *Moral*, as is that of the *Theorick* Signs, and which proceeds from the Significative Energy of the Sacraments alone. (2.) A Sign, as such, cannot be the Instrument or Means of exhibiting the thing signified, unless by virtue of the Signification which it has. (3.) They who do make use of those Signs, are before fully perswaded in their own Minds of the Grace promised; for without such a Persuasion they neither would, nor indeed lawfully could make use of them: Therefore they do not concur as the Instruments which exhibit that Grace.

As for our Parts, we say, that God exhibits his Grace to us by the Sacraments, not by actually conferring it upon us through them, but by representing and placing it as it were before our Eyes by those clear and manifest Signs, not at a distance as a thing future, but as present. And this Efficacy is nothing else but *Objective*, which requires the Intellectual Faculty to be rightly disposed, that it may be able to apprehend that which the Sign offers objectively to the Mind. Hence we see after what manner the Sacraments operate in us, *viz.* as *Signs* representing to our Minds the thing signified: nor ought any other Efficacy to be sought for in them. Thus the Sacrament confirms our Faith, by convincing us of the Truth of the Promise of God, who seals it to us by this outward and visible Sign, and assures us that we are in Covenant with him, and that he will certainly perform what he has promised, if we are not failing in our Duty to him. Again with respect to us, the Sacrament is a Motive and Cherisher of our Piety towards God, since 'tis an Obligation and a kind of Military Oath whereby we devote our selves to his Service.

[NOTE. How far this Notion of the Nature and Efficacy of the Sacraments in general is agreeable to the Doctrine of the Church of England, may be discerned from what she teaches us in her Catechism in these Words: “ By a Sacrament I mean an outward

The true Efficacy of the Sacraments.

tion of a Sacrament.

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"ward and visible Sign of an inward and spiritual
 "Grace that is given to us: Which Rite was ordain-
 "ed by Christ himself, as a Means whereby we re-
 "ceive that Grace, and a Pledg to assure us thereof."
 Now by these Words 'tis plain, that no other Efficacy
 of conveying Grace is ascribed to the Sacraments, than
 as they are outward Signs appointed by Christ to re-
 present that inward and spiritual Grace, which he al-
 one bestows upon us; and this is very suitable to the
 Doctrine already laid down.]

*The Sacra-
 ments two.*

We do not think it requisite in this place to enter
 into a large dispute about the Number of the Sacra-
 ments. For since by that Word we understand some
 external Rites ordained by our Saviour, as visible
 Signs which seal to us the New Covenant, 'tis evident
 there are no other Sacraments, besides those Rites
 which Christ has commanded to be observed in his
 Church, viz. *Baptism* and *the Supper of the Lord*, of
 which we will treat in the two next Chapters. As
 for the other Sacraments invented by the *Romanists*,
 we shall in the Sequel shew, that they were not or-
 dained by Christ, but are of mere human Invention,
 and tend to Superstition.

C H A P. XXII.

Of BAPTISM.

IN instituting of the two Rites or Sacraments, of
Baptism and *the Lord's Supper*, our Saviour seems to
 have had regard to the Custom that then prevailed a-
 mong the *Jews* and *Gentiles*: which is conspicuous in
 both the Sacraments. For as the *Jews* in receiving
 the *Gentile Proselytes of the Gate*, washed them with
 Water as a Testimony of their having left the Wor-
 ship of false Gods, and embraced that of the true God:
 So our Saviour appointed *Baptism*, to shew that both
Jews and *Gentiles* were very corrupt in their Morals,
 and stood in need of Amendment of Life. So again,
 as it was customary among the *Jews* to invite their

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Friends and Neighbours upon their Festivals, especially of the Passover and Pentecost ; and at the end of the Repast to distribute a better sort of Bread and Wine among the Guests, giving God Thanks, and making a Solemn Commemoration suitable to the occasion of the Day : So our Saviour in the Institution of his last Supper seems to have had an eye upon those Ceremonies, and added thereunto the Commemoration of his Bloody Death.

But without insisting any longer on the *Analogy* there is between the Rites of the *New*, and those of the *Old Testament*, we shall in this Chapter treat, First, of the *Nature* ; Secondly, of the *Subject* ; and Thirdly, of the various *Circumstances of Baptism*.

S E C T. I.

Of the Nature of BAPTISM.

“ BAPTISM is that Rite or Ceremony of the *Baptism* New Covenant, whereby the Faithful by Immersion *what.* into Water, as by a Sacred Pledg, are assured of the Favour of God, Remission of Sins and Eternal Life ; and by which they engage themselves to an Amendment of Life, and an Obedience to the Divine Commands.”

Upon this, two Questions are started : First, Whether our Saviour instituted this *Baptism* of Water, and *tism instituted by* commanded it to be observed in the Church ? Secondly, Whether in case he did institute *Water-Baptism*, it *our Saviour.* be at present obligatory to Christians ? *Faustus Soci-* nus maintains the Negative, in a particular Tract concerning *Water-Baptism* : But we the Affirmative of both Questions.

As to the first Question, we maintain, that *Water-Baptism* was appointed by our Saviour, and that upon these two Accounts ; (1.) Because we have an express Command for so doing, *Mat. 28. 19. Go ye* (says Jesus to his Apostles) *and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* (2.) The same thing is confirmed by the Practice of the Apostles, who in several places both

both in the *Acts*, and in the *Epistles*, are said to have baptized with Water those whom they converted to the Christian Faith.

An Objection answered.

But here it may be objected, that many believed in Christ, who yet were not baptized, as the twelve Apostles, the seventy Disciples, the hundred and twenty mentioned *Acts* 1. 15. and the five hundred mentioned *1 Cor.* 15. 6. *Ans.* (1.) It cannot be inferred that, because we do not read of their being baptized, therefore they were not; since many things were done of which we have no account in the Sacred Writings. (2.) Some of them are said to be baptized by St. *John*, from whence we may fairly conclude that the rest also were baptized. (3.) Supposing that they were not baptized, yet the Case betwixt them and those whom they were sent to baptize, is widely different.

As to the second Question, Whether Christians at present be obliged to baptize with Water? *Socinus* is of opinion, that tho the Words of our Saviour do imply *Water-Baptism*, yet they reach only the Apostles, or such Ministers as were sent out to the *Jews* or Infidels, who leaving the Religion of their Country were converted to Christ; but do not affect those who are born of Christian Parents, and are trained up from their Infancy in the Christian Religion. But before we deliver our Opinion in this Point, it will be requisite to say something of *Baptism* itself, and the Nature thereof.

Baptism consists in Immersion into Water.

Baptism then consists in *Washing*, or rather *immersing* the whole Body into Water, as was customary in the Primitive Times. By this Rite is shadowed out to us a full Resolution of repenting of our Sins; and God's gracious remitting them to true Penitents, and granting them a Spiritual Strength to get delivered from the Pollutions of Sin, just as the Body is washed from its Defilements by Water. Hence tis called *the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins*. Our Saviour to this Rite, used already by *John* the Baptist, adds another Signification, *viz.* a Profession

¹ See to this purpose, *Acts* 2. 38, 41. & 8. 12, 13, 38. & 10. 47. & 9. 18. & 22. 16, &c. *Rom.* 6. 3. *1 Cor.* 1. 13. & 12. 13. ² *John* 1. 37, 41.

of his Name, and a Publick Acknowledgment of the Doctrine which he preached. Hence he commanded Baptism to be administred *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: To the intent that they who are baptized should be lifted under the Banner of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and profess themselves the Disciples of that Doctrine which owed its Original to God the Father, was revealed and preached by God the Son, and by various Signs, Miracles and Gifts, was confirmed by God the Holy Ghost. To this the Apostles added another Allusion, founded on the former, *viz.* That it should be a Figure of the Spiritual Death of Sin, and of a Resurrection to Newness of Life. Thus St. Paul says, *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death; that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life.*

It may be here asked, whether *Immersion* be so necessary, as that there is no Baptism without it? *Answ.* ^{*Duty performed by*} It does not seem to be so necessary: for since *Baptism* ^{*Sprinkling.*} is only an External Rite, representing an Internal and Spiritual Action; only such an Act is sufficient as fully represents to us the Institution of Baptism. Upon great and emergent Occasions then some Allowances ought to be made; especially in cold Countries, and in case of *Infant-Baptism*; since their tender Bodies would soon receive Damage by being dipped into cold Water. This is the Reason why *Sprinkling* is at present so Customary in our *Western* Climates; and tho it deviates a little from the Primitive Institution of *Dipping* practised in hot Countries, yet *Baptism* is duly administred by *Sprinkling only*. Add to this, that there are not wanting Arguments to prove that *Baptism* was even in the first Ages of Christianity administred by *Sprinkling*. For (as some argue) 'tis not at all unlikely but that among the three thousand converted and baptized, *Acts* 2. 41. there were some Women, and the promiscuous Dipping of them into

Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 6. 3, 4.

Water with the Men would have been against the Rules of Decency and Modesty; therefore 'tis more probable, that they were baptized by sprinkling or pouring on of Water, than that they were immersed or dipped into it. Besides (say they) 'tis incredible, that there should be in *Jerusalem*, especially in the Place where *Peter* preached, such a Quantity of Water at hand, as was sufficient for the Immerfing of fo great a Number of Converts. Let this be as it will, *Baptism* we say is duly administred by *Sprinkling* only, especially since *Dipping* in our colder Climates cannot be practised without manifestly endangering the Lives of the Persons so dipped, if they be young, and baptized at some Seasons of the Year.

S E C T. II.

Of the Subject of Baptism, and particularly of Pædo-Baptism.

The Subject of Baptism.

The Subject of *Baptism*, to whom it is to be administred, is a Believer, one who is endued with a true Faith in *Jesus Christ*, and touched with a serious Repentance for his past Offences. For Baptism was appointed to be both a Characteristick Mark of Christianity, and a Seal of the Covenant into which God entred with Men through *Jesus Christ*. The Terms of this Covenant are, on Man's part Faith in Christ, Repentance and a future Holy Life; that so he may assuredly expect what God for his part has promised, viz. Remission of Sins and Eternal Life. Now 'tis necessary that the Mind should be answerable to the external Profession, which is declared solemnly by a Sign appointed by God himself: and thus we find in Scripture, Faith and Repentance to be required before Baptism.

From hence it follows that the *Principal* and *Primary Subjects* of *Baptism* are Believers, who abandoning a false Religion, and a wicked Course of Life, embrace Christianity, and stedfastly purpose to lead a

Mar. 16. 16. Acts 2. 38, 41. & 8. 37.

new Life according to the Precepts of our Saviour : For to these in the largest Sense is this Ceremony applied. However they also are the true and genuine *Subjects of Baptism*, who being born of Christian Parents, and educated from their Childhood in the Christian Religion, do by being baptized testify their Faith in Christ, and their Resolution of future Obedience. For tho Baptism chiefly regards those who forsake a false Religion, and are converted to Christ ; yet if we take a closer View of the Nature of the Command, it will appear that it is of perpetual Obligation, and is binding upon all who give up their Names to Christ, even upon those that are born of Christian Parents. This we observe in opposition to a Sect of Men, who have professedly declared against all Ordinances ; who tell us that *Water-Baptism* is now of no longer Use among Christians, that it is a carnal Ceremony, and that Baptism is only that of the Spirit. But let these Men remember, that by thus denying the use of *Water-Baptism* as a superstitious and unlawful Rite, they put the Affront upon Christ himself who instituted it, oppose the Apostles and the whole succeeding Christian Church who constantly practised it, and are an Offence to all those Christian Churches who still baptize with Water.

Among other Questions relating to the Subject of *The Case of Baptism*, none deserves greater Consideration than of *Infant-Baptism*, viz. What we ought to think of the *Baptism of Infants*, who neither believe in Christ, nor can give any Testimony of Repentance or Holiness? Before we deliver our Sentiments on this Matter, we will consider the different Opinions of others about it : For some there are who urge *Infant-Baptism* as necessary, whilst others reject it as unlawful, or at least as *needless and superstitious*.

Several there are who urge the *Necessity of Pædo-Baptism*, tho they do not all go upon the same Principle. The *Romanists* and *Lutherans* maintain that *Baptism* is the *Laver of Regeneration*, and the Means whereby God bestows it on Men. Now, since all Persons, even *Infants*, are tainted with Original Sin, and no Man unless he be born again can attain Salvation ; hence they infer the *Baptism of Infants* to be necessary.

ry, that they may be regenerated and saved : So that (say the *Romanists*) if any Persons die unbaptized, they, as unregenerate, are excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven. However the *Lutherans*, tho they maintain that *Baptism* is the Means of Regeneration, yet do not upon that account exclude out of Heaven all Infants that die without Baptism ; but tell us, that if they have not the Opportunity of being baptized, they are regenerated after an extraordinary manner, and so are rendered capable of Salvation. Now there is this Difference between the *Romanists* and the *Lutherans* Opinion, that the former maintain that the Habit of Faith is infused by Baptism, and that Baptism does *opere operato* wash away all precedent Sins : whilst the *Lutherans* believe that Infants are endued with the Act of Faith ; not indeed so as to understand or feel the Motions of Faith, but that there is in them a certain Operation of the Holy Ghost, which makes them capable of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is offered to them in Baptism. As to this latter Notion of the *Lutherans*, it is very absurd, since there can be no such thing as Faith in New-born Infants ; for they want Knowledge, and are incapable of being instructed in, or rightly discerning the Objects to be believed, without which there can be no Faith. With respect to the *Romanists* Opinion we say, (1.) That it is ridiculous in them to assert, that the Habit of Faith is infused into Infants by Baptism ; and that by an external Ceremony a supernatural Vertue is produced in the Soul instantaneously : nor is it conceivable what this Habit of Faith is, or what it operates in Infants. And (2.) That it is as ridiculous to assert, that Baptism takes away all former Sins. For besides, as we elsewhere * proved, there can be no such thing as Sin properly speaking in Infants ; it is preposterous to attribute Remission of Sins to an External Rite (which may be performed without any good Intention at all, and is administered to Infants without any good Intention of theirs) since it is all along ascribed to Faith and Repentance.

* B. III. C. I. S. 4.

As to the *Contra-Remonstrants*, tho they grant that *Baptism* is not the *Laver of Regeneration*, and therefore have not the same Grounds for urging the Necessity of *Pædo-Baptism*, as the *Romanists* and *Lutherans* have; yet because 'tis a Seal of the New Covenant, they maintain that Infants ought to be baptized. They do not indeed venture so far as to damn all Children who die unbaptized, but they urge the Necessity of Baptism in order to their being included in the Covenant. Now if the Nature of their Doctrine were thorowly weighed, it will appear that this their Assertion is grounded upon no Principle at all, nay runs counter to several of their other Maxims. They dare not assert that all who are baptiz'd are within the Covenant. For since the visible Church is made up of the *Elect* and *Reprobate*, and the latter according to their Tenets will be for ever excluded from the Divine Covenant; they dare not with any Confidence affirm that all the Children of the Faithful are comprehended within the Covenant, and sealed by Baptism with the Seal of the Covenant; but only such as are elected. Hence it is that they make no scruple to affirm, that if the baptized Infants of Believers when grown up, should by a wicked Life shew that they have not the Spirit of Regeneration, they have not lost that Spirit, but really never had it: and that they are baptized upon a charitable Supposition that they are in Covenant. By this Doctrine they really overthrow the Necessity of *Infant-Baptism*, as being only a doubtful and fallacious Sign of the Divine Covenant: Nay, which is worse, they call God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (in whose Name *Baptism* is administered) to attest to that which is doubtful, uncertain, and with respect to many Persons downright false. *Zanchius* to avoid this Absurdity has maintained, that Baptism ought not to be administered but with this *Proviso*, or Form expressed or understood, *I Baptize N. O God, according to the Election and Purpose of thy Divine Will.*

But not to insist upon shewing the Inconsistency of this their Doctrine concerning the Necessity of *Infant-Baptism*, with their other Doctrine concerning *absolute Predestination*, let us enquire into the thing it self, *whether*

The Contra-Remonstrants Opinion examined.

whether the Baptism of *Infants* be necessary? As for our parts we say that it is not absolutely necessary; (1.) Because there is no expresse Command for it in Scripture; nay all those Passages wherein Baptism is commanded, do immediately relate to *Adult* Persons, since they are ordered to be instructed, and Faith is pre-requisite as a necessary Qualification, which are peculiar to the *Adult* alone'. (2.) There is no Instance that can be produc'd, from whence it may indisputably be infer'd that any Child was baptized by the Apostles. (3.) The Necessity of *Pedo-Baptism* was never asserted in any Council before that of *Carthage* held in the year 418. True it is, it was an antient Rite used for several Ages in the Church of Christ, especially in *Africa*; but it was only received as a Rite that might lawfully and with Edification be administred, without any notion of the Necessity thereof. So that since there are no Marks in Antiquity before the said Council, of the Necessity of *Infant-Baptism*, there is no reason why at present it should be held as necessary.

*Objections
answered.*

Against the two last Arguments, there may be several things objected. Against the second it may be urged, that we read of whole Families being baptized; wherein doubtless there were some Children. *Answ.* As for my part, I will readily grant that there might be Children in those Families; yet the Holy Scripture furnishes me with no solid Argument, whereby I can demonstrate it evidently against others who shall deny or question the Truth of it; since it does not expressly say there were any Children in them. And tho this should be granted, yet we are not inform'd that they were baptized together with their Parents: on the contrary, all those who were baptiz'd are said to give God thanks, which Children could never do. So that at the most, this Argument amounts to no more than a bare Probability.

Again it may be said, That St. *Peter* exhorting the converted *Jews* to be baptiz'd, makes use of this Argument, *For the Promise is unto you and to your Children*?. *Answ.* It cannot be prov'd that by *Children*

¹ Mat. 28. 19. Mar. 16. 16. Acts 2. 37, 38. ² Acts 16. 15, 32. 1 Cor. 1. 15, 16. ³ Acts 2. 38, 39.

in this place are understood *Infants*, but rather their *Posterity*, according to the usual Acceptation of that Word¹.

Lastly, they may with respect to our third Argument object, That *Baptism* came in the room of *Circumcision*; and since the latter was administred to *Infants*, the former ought to be administred to them likewise. *Answ.* Taking this for granted, yet it will by no means follow that all the Circumstances prescrib'd in *Circumcision* should likewise be observ'd in *Baptism*. For (1.) *Infant-Baptism* is no where so expressly commanded as *Circumcision* is. (2.) It would from thence follow, that *Infants* should be baptized on the *eighth Day* precisely, or else they would be cut off from the People of God, (3.) Nay they should be baptiz'd as soon as they are born: for since there is no day prefixed for *Infant-Baptism*, and it may be administred to *Infants* immediately upon their Birth without any Prejudice, and Children may die as soon as they are born; no reason can be assign'd why it should be put off even for one day. (4.) And lastly, if this Consequence were of any force, I might with parity of Reason infer, that since the *Males* were only circumcis'd, therefore now it is unlawful for the *Females* to be baptiz'd; which (as any one may perceive) being very absurd, 'tis plain that with respect to the outward Circumstances, the case of *Circumcision* and *Baptism* is not in all things the same.

Others, viz. the *Anabaptists*, reject *Infant-Bap-* The Law-
tism as unlawful, or at least as needless and supersti- fulness of
tious. These are as much on the other extreme, since *Infant-*
they determine that which the Scripture has left un- *Baptism*
determined. We own that there is no Precept nor asserted a-
undoubted Instance in Scripture of *Infant-Baptism*: gainst the
but this is not enough to render it *unlawful*. For were *Anabap-*
it unlawful, it must be either because it is expressly for- tists.
bidden by God; or tho it be not forbidden, yet is a
Rite so absurd and unreasonable in its own nature, as
to be inconsistent with the Christian Religion. (1.)
The former of these cannot be said, because we no
where read of such a Prohibition. And (2.) That

¹ Acts 13. 32, 33.

Infant-Baptism is not inconsistent with Christianity, is easily evinc'd. For *Baptism* may be consider'd as a Badg of our Christian Profession, and as a Seal on God's part of our being in Covenant with him; and in this sense it relates to all that are comprehended in the Covenant without exception, and consequently to the Children of Believers, who are reckoned as being in the same Covenant with their Parents. Or else it may be consider'd as a Seal of Repentance and of the Remission of past Sins; in which sense it seems as if it could not be applied to *Infants*: and from this Topick it is that they chiefly argue against *Infant-Baptism*. For say they, 'tis very foolish (1.) to baptize those who are incapable of being instructed. (2.) To baptize those for Repentance and Remission of Sins, who have not sinn'd. (3.) And to baptize those in the Name of Christ, or of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who cannot profess the Doctrine of Christ, nor promise to amend their Lives. These things at first blush carry a face of Argument along with them. But when Infants are baptiz'd, what necessity is there to assign no other End of this their Baptism? Our Saviour had no occasion to be taught, or to repent, or to profess, and yet he was baptiz'd by *John*. Wherefore for the more duly stating of these things, we shall insist a little a more at large on the End of *Baptism*.

Baptism, by its primitive Institution denotes a Profession of the Name of Christ, a Resolution of Repentance on Man's part, and Remission of Sins committed before Baptism on God's part. Now whereas Repentance terminates in a Holiness of Life, and Remission of Sins in eternal Happiness; hence it is that the *ultimate End* of *Baptism* is the Profession of Holiness, and the Confirmation of everlasting Life. From this 'tis plain, that *Baptism* most properly and with respect to all its intents and purposes is administred to *Sinners*, who being touch'd with a serious Repentance for their past Sins, resolve upon repenting, and are in hopes that their Sins are remitted. But if *Baptism* be administred to one who is not a Sinner, then it will not be the Seal of Repentance and Remission of Sins, but of Holiness, and a Right to eternal Life.

Nor

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fants.

Nor can any one say that *Baptism* is administred to such an one in vain, since the chief and ultimate End of *Baptism* will have its completion in him. To apply this then to *Infant-Baptism*; I say, that in the same manner 'tis an Obligation to Holiness of Life, and seals to Infants a Title to Eternal Happiness, tho by reason of their sinless State it cannot properly denote Repentance and Remission of Sins.

To conclude this Argument, my Opinion in short is this. Whereas the *Baptism* of *Water* is not properly a Part of Christian Holiness, and does not purify the Mind of Man; but is only an external Rite, by which a Man professes himself a Disciple of Christ and a Follower of Christian Holiness, and is made a Partaker of the Divine Covenant and of all the Benefits promis'd therein: Therefore I think every one ought to be left to his Liberty of making use of this Rite after such a manner as he thinks may be most conducive to those Ends; and that no Man ought to be censur'd or excommunicated upon the account of an external Ceremony. If any Man offers Children to be baptiz'd, they ought to be baptiz'd; since *Pædobaptism* contains nothing in it contrary to the Genius of Christianity, but is very agreeable thereto, and has been practis'd for so many Ages in the Churches of Christ: To which universal Usage 'tis not fit that any one should oppose himself, especially when it cannot be done without giving a Scandal to the Church wherein he lives. But if any Person thinks the *Baptism* of *Adults* to be more agreeable to the Genius of Christianity, and that Men are under a stricter Obligation to Holiness, when they receive *Baptism* with a solemn Promise going before, and does upon that account delay the *Baptism* of his Children till they arrive to Years of Discretion; I think, I say, in this case such an one ought to be left to his Liberty. For of this we may rest assur'd, that it is of no moment in the sight of God whether we be baptiz'd into his Name in our Infancy or in our riper years; but whether we lead Lives answerable to the Profession we make in *Baptism*: always remembering what the Apostle says,

That *Baptism* saveth us; not the putting away the Filth of the *Flesh*, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God by the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ*.

S E C T. III.

Of the various Circumstances of Baptism, and particularly of Rebaptization.

Having in the foregoing Section discours'd very largely of the *Subject* of Baptism, or to whom it ought to be administred, we shall in this consider some of the Circumstances relating thereto; such as the *Place* wherein, and the *Person* by whom it ought to be perform'd.

The Place of Baptism. As to the *Place* of Baptism, it is very fit it should be administred publickly in the Church, and in the face of the Congregation. (1.) For since by Baptism we are made Members of Christ, and initiated into his Church; it is convenient that the Church should be present at the Initiation of a new Member that is incorporated into it. (2.) Because Baptism is the Badge of Christianity, it is fit therefore that it should be administred in the presence of those who are by the same mark distinguish'd from other Men. (3.) Because Prayers are made at Baptism; therefore they are more effectual, if pour'd out by many that are assembled in the Name of Christ. However in cases of extreme necessity, especially in *Infant-Baptism*, when the Child is in danger of its Life, Baptism may be administred privately; provided they make not that a matter of State and Grandeur, which is only to be admitted in cases of Necessity. For if the Person can be brought or come to Church, then those private Baptisms which have prevail'd in some Places cannot be excus'd; since they evade the Ends of publick Baptism, which are, that the Congregation should be Witnesses of such a Person's being admitted into the Church of Christ, and that they should be put in mind how they were devoted themselves to the Service of Christ in Baptism.

The Minister of Baptism.

Many and great Disputes there have been concerning the *Person* by whom Baptism should be administred; but for the sake of good Order it is requisite that it should

should be perform'd by the proper *Minister* of the Church. Where therefore there is any establish'd Church, it is very undecent that it should be administred by a young or a Lay-man; but superstitious when perform'd by Women. But if no proper Minister can be had, as 'tis the Duty of every Believer to announce the Word of Salvation to his Neighbour; so he may administer Baptism to one that is converted by his preaching.

But here a Question may be started, which is very ^{A Query} well worth the discussing; *viz.* That since there are ^{answered.} many Sects among Christians who in their Opinions differ from one another, whether he who is baptiz'd by a Minister of any one Sect, should at his Baptism make a Confession of the particular Tenets held by that Sect? *Answ.* By no means; since Baptism being administred in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, consecrates a Man to Jesus Christ, and devotes him to his Service; but obliges him to the Tenets of no particular Man. It is therefore an unworthy and inexcusable Abuse of Baptism, to convert it into a Badg of any private Doctrine whatsoever; and differs little from that Crime of which the Apostle professes himself to be clear, *viz.* of his baptizing any one in his own Name¹. For by Baptism to oblige any Person to the Belief of any human Doctrine, tho it be not formally exprest, is as much as to baptize him into that Teacher's Name. The proper and lawful way then of administring Baptism, is to enter Men into the Service of Christ alone, to oblige them to fight under his Banner, to believe in him, and to keep his Commands, as clearly expressed in the Holy Scriptures. Whereas otherwise Baptism would be a displayed Standard of Schism and Division; and they who make use of it to serve a Party, manifestly contradict the Apostle's Words², who tells us, that as there is but *One Lord*, so there is but *One Baptism* by which we are dedicated to him.

From hence seemed to arise the Error of *Rebap-The Rise* tizing those who had been baptiz'd by Hereticks: For of *Ana-* since it was suppos'd that the Hereticks had revolted baptism.

¹ 1 Cor. 1. 13, 15. ² Eph. 4. 6.

from the Integrity of the Faith, their Baptism also, as initiating a Man in their corrupt Doctrines, was rejected as vicious, and such as were baptized by them applying themselves to the Catholicks, were in the Judgment of some bound to be rebaptized. But this Error is easily refuted by what has been already said, because Baptism administred as well by Hereticks as by the Orthodox, tends to the same End, viz. of devoting Men to Jesus Christ and his Doctrine. If any Persons therefore have swerved from the primitive Institution thereof, by adding any new Obligation which was not commanded by our Saviour; this Addition does not seem to destroy the Essence of Baptism, since 'tis received not as a *Human*, but as a *Divine* Rite. Baptism therefore ought not to be repeated, since the Man is by the former consecrated to Christ: Only that stricter Obligation, by which he obliged himself to a human Explication, ceases and becomes void of it self, as being erroneous, and not included in the Divine Baptism.

An Objection
on answer-
ed.

But you will say that the Disciples who were baptized by *John*, were rebaptized by the Apostles.

Ans^r. Supposing this to be true, as 'tis very likely it was, yet it makes nothing to the purpose. For the Case of those who were baptized by *John*, is not the same with that of those who are baptized by Christians; since *John's* Baptism does not seem in all things to agree with the Baptism instituted by Christ. This being a Point controverted between the *Romanists* and the *Reformed*, we will briefly give our Opinion about it. This Controversy we believe might easily be determined, if we would but consider that the Baptism of *John* was partly the same, and partly different from that of Christ. It was the same, in that it was as much a Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins as our Saviour's was: It was different, in as much as *John* did not baptize in the Name of Jesus Christ, or of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but only exhorted those whom he baptized to believe in him that should come after him. Now the Difference lies in this; That *John* by his Preaching and Baptism

Acts 19. 5, &c.

prepar'd

prepar'd Men for the Reception of the Doctrine of Christ; whereas our Saviour would have those who already believed in him to be enrolled as it were to his Service by being baptized in his Name, which he appointed as a publick Profession of Faith and Obedience. No wonder then if the Apostles rebaptized those who were baptiz'd by *John*, when they were converted to Faith in Christ, and by this Baptism initiated them in the Doctrine which they had already received by Faith. But those who are baptized by Christians, tho of different Persuasions, are already initiated in the Doctrine of Christ, and consequently do not want to be rebaptized.

Upon the whole matter we say, that whether Persons be baptized in their *Infancy*, or when they are *Adult*, there is no necessity for their being *rebaptized*, since no such thing is commanded; and as we are born but once, so likewise are we regenerated but once: One Baptism therefore is sufficient to shadow out to us our New Birth, or our Spiritual Resurrection from the Spiritual Death of Sin. Wherefore those Men are to blame who look upon Baptism administred to *Infants* to be null, and consequently rebaptize them when they are grown up. But much more are those rigid *Anabaptists* in the wrong, who rebaptize those who were baptized in their riper years, but not in their Congregation, when they enter into Communion with them. What is this but to make Baptism the Banner of Schism, and rashly to pretend that there is no Salvation to be had in any other Church but their own?

C H A P. XXIII.

Of the Sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER.

THE LORD'S SUPPER is the other Rite of *The Lord's* the *New Testament*, whereby they who believe *Supper*. in Jesus Christ, and lead Lives by Faith according to his

his Precepts, do by eating of Bread broken, and by drinking of Wine poured out, commemorate with grateful Hearts the Death of our Saviour, and profess themselves to be his true and living Members, whose Souls are spiritually nourish'd by the Body and Blood of Christ, as their Bodies are by the Bread and Wine; and who as Members of the same Body maintain a mutual Charity with one another.

Things considerable in it.

But for the more distinct handling of this Subject, we shall in the several Sections of this Chapter, First, consider the Opinion of the *Romanists* about the Words of the Institution of this Sacrament. Secondly, we shall consider the Opinion of the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*. Thirdly, we shall treat of the true End and lawful Use of the *Lord's-Supper*. And Fourthly, we shall take notice of some of the more notorious Abuses committed by the *Romanists* with respect thereto.

S E C T. I.

The Romanists Opinion about the Words of the Institution of this Sacrament considered.

It is of Divine Institution.

That this Rite or Sacrament is of *Divine Authority*, appears from the Words of the Institution thereof; for *St. Matthew* tells us, *Ch. 26. 26, 27, 28.* That as they were eating, *Jesus took Bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body: And he took the Cup, and gave Thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* It signifies nothing to say that our Saviour commanded this to his Apostles only, and therefore it does not affect us; for the Reason added, *which is shed for many*, &c. has a relation not only to the Apostles, but to all who believe in Jesus Christ. They therefore whose Duty it is gratefully to commemorate the Death of our Saviour, are obliged to observe this Holy Rite. Hence *St. Paul*, making mention of the Institution of the last Supper, prescribes the Observation of it to all Men;

Men; *I have (says he¹) received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, &c.* This is likewise very evident from the Caution which the Apostle gives of a Man's examining himself², *before he presumes to eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup*; adding this Denunciation, *That if he should eat and drink unworthily, he would be guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ, and would eat and drink Judgment to himself.* Now this Caution would have been superfluous, if this Rite were not commanded: For were it arbitrary, every one might omit it without Sin, but a Man by the unworthy use of it would bring Judgment upon himself, as not discerning the Lord's Body; every one therefore for fear of falling into this Judgment by unworthy receiving, would wholly abstain from it; and so the Apostle by this his Caution would have deterred all Men from the Sacrament.

This Rite consists in eating Bread publicly broken *Wherein it* by the Minister before the whole Congregation, and *consists.* in drinking of Wine publicly poured out; which Ceremony is join'd with Faith, Prayer and Thanksgiving. These Symbols of Bread and Wine then, do shadow out to us the Body of Christ broken, and his Blood shed for us, which is intimated by the very Words of the Institution, wherein Bread is stiled Christ's Body, and Wine his Blood. Having premis'd this concerning the Words of the Institution, let us hear the *Romanists* Opinion about them.

They sticking to the literal Sense, and admitting of no figurative meaning in these Words, [*This is my Body, this is the Blood of the New Testament*] tell us; "That the Bread and Wine is changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ by TRANSUB-
STANTIATION, as they term it; so that the Substance of Bread and Wine being destroyed, there succeeds into its place the Substance both of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ." Or as the Council of *Trent* has determined it; "In the blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, our Saviour Jesus Christ, real God and real Man, is truly and substantially contain'd under the Species of those visible

*The Pa-
pists Op-
inion about
the Words
of the In-
stitution.*

¹ 1 Cor. 11. 23, &c. ² *Ibid.* Ver. 27, &c.

“ Signs; and the same Council declares that by the
 “ Consecration of the Bread and Wine, a change is
 “ made of the whole Substance of the Bread into
 “ the Substance of our Saviour’s Body, and of the
 “ whole Substance of the Wine into the Substance of
 “ his Blood.”

*Refuted by
 several Ar-
 guments.*

But this Opinion is very absurd; and ’tis mani-
 fest that the Apostles received at the Hands of Christ
 no other Substance but that of Bread alone; which
 we shall prove by the following Arguments. First,
 that which Christ took into his Hands, he gave to his
 Disciples, and this was Bread, as the Evangelists ex-
 pressly declare, who tell us, that *he took Bread, brake
 it, and gave it to his Disciples.* Secondly, if the Body
 of Christ were eaten in the Lord’s Supper, it must
 have been his Body before these Words were pro-
 nounced, because it cannot be said of any thing which
 is not, that it is. Now if it were his Body before the
 Words, then the Bread was either chang’d by these
 Words, which is absurd; or by other Words, which
 they will by no means allow. Thirdly, it is called
 Bread by St. Paul, even after the Pronunciation of
 these Words’, and therefore it remains after Consec-
 ration real B R E A D. Fourthly, this Doctrine of
Transubstantiation is repugnant to all our Senses, which
 unanimously testify that here is not the *Body* of Christ,
 but *Bread.* Now if our Senses, when rightly disposed,
 are not to be credited, then there will be no such thing
 as Certainty in the Christian Religion. True it is,
 there are many things to be believed, which are
 above the Comprehension of our Senses, but none
 that are contradictory to, and found to be false by the
 Testimony of our Senses. Fifthly, nothing can be
 changed into that which it is already, and has never
 ceased from being, but only into something else which
 it is not; else it would be and not be, which the *Roma-
 nists* themselves own to be a Contradiction. Since then
 the Body of Christ did already exist, the Bread could
 not be changed into it. * Sixthly and lastly, this Doc-
 trine is full of Absurdities, with respect to the Nature
 of a Body: Such as these, (1.) There would be two

* 1 Cor. 10. 17. & 11. 26, 28.

Christs, one born of the Virgin *Mary*, the other form'd out of Bread; one broken and eaten, the other neither broken nor eaten. (2.) There would be Accidents without a Subject, since the Accidents of Bread and Wine remain: Now these are not inherent in the Bread and Wine, being already transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Christ; nor in the Body of Christ, because then they would be the Accidents of that Body, whereas they are the Accidents of Bread. (3.) A Substance clothed with its proper Accidents would lie hid under foreign Accidents, so as neither by the one nor by the other to be perceptible by the Senses. (4.) The Body of Christ would be both glorious in Heaven, and it would be corruptible and mortal here on Earth. (5.) It would be of the same Extension in the Eucharist, as 'tis naturally in Heaven; and it would take up space in Heaven, but in the Eucharist have little or none at all. (6.) It would be in many Places at once, be moved by contrary and different Motions at once, both Eastward and Westward, and so clash against it self. (7.) And lastly, not to mention any more, Christ would have sat down with his Disciples, and have given himself to be eaten by them; and he would have been eaten by his Disciples, and yet he afterwards gave them the Cup; nay if he himself partook of that Supper, he did eat himself, he had not a Mouth in his Head, but his Head in his Mouth.

However they produce many Arguments, whereby *Objections* they endeavour to maintain this their absurd Opinion; *answered.* but they are all so weak, that they seem to rely more upon their Number than their Strength.

The first Argument they deduce from the Types and *The first* Figures of the Old Testament, which they tell us do *taken from* shadow out the Eucharist; and which are chiefly these *the Types* three, the Paschal Lamb, the Blood of the Old Testament ^{*of the Old*} Testament, and Manna. Now (say they) the Types are less worthy than the Thing typified, since the one are only Shadows, whilst the other is the very Substance. But these Types are more excellent than Bread, therefore 'tis not Bread, but the very Body of Christ which

¹ Exod. 24. 8. Heb. 9. 20, 21.

is in the Eucharist. *Ans.* (1.) They are not Figures of the Eucharist, but of Jesus Christ himself, as are all the Types of the Old Testament'. Thus the Paschal Lamb represents Christ our true Passover; and Manna the true Bread which came down from Heaven'. As to what *Bellarmino* says, that the Blood of the Old Testament does not represent the very Blood of Christ, but the Eucharist, it is very ridiculous, and contrary to what the whole ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* teaches us. (2.) It is very absurd to pretend to Figures of Figures, for Figures represent the Substance it self, and not a Figure.

*The second
from John
6. 51.*

A second Argument they take from the Promise which our Saviour made concerning the Eucharist; *Joh. 6. 51. The Bread that I will give is, my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World.* *Ans.* (1.) Many of the *Romanists* themselves own, and among the rest Cardinal *Cajetan*, that in this Chapter our Saviour does not treat of the Eucharist. (2.) This is an inverted Order of speaking, and directly contrary to that which we find in the Institution. There 'tis said of the Bread, *This is my Body*; but here 'tis said of the Flesh of Christ, that it is Bread. If then the meaning of the Words of the Institution be, that Bread is chang'd into the Body of our Saviour, it must be said that the Sense of the Words of the Promise is, that the Body of Christ is chang'd into Bread, which is absurd. (3.) Because, *ver. 53.* Christ says, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you*; it must be concluded that the Cup ought to be administred to the Laity, and the Lord's-Supper to Infants; but this they will not allow of. (4.) The Apostles themselves would not then have had Life in them, because they had not as yet been partakers of the Supper. Our Saviour therefore speaks of the Spiritual eating by Faith; and what that is, we shall shew more at large hereafter.

*The third
from the
Words of
the Institu-
tion.*

A third Argument they deduce from the Words of the Institution, *Take, eat, this is my Body*; &c. And they first of all endeavour in the general to prove that here is no *Trope* or figurative Expression, (1.) Be-

¹ Col. 2. 17. ² 1 Cor. 5. 7. ³ Joh. 6.

cause the Sacraments are not instituted by Metaphorical; but Proper Words. And (2.) Because Figures are not usually applied in Testaments, since the greatest Perspicuity is required in them, to avoid all Dispute about the Will of the Testator. *Ans.* With respect to the former of these we say, that the contrary appears from the Institution of Circumcision¹; and from the eating of the Paschal Lamb²; which they themselves maintain to be Sacraments. Now the one was a sign of the Covenant made with Abraham, and the other a Remembrance of the Lord's passing over the Israelites when he destroyed the Egyptians. As to the latter we say, (1.) That *Figurative* are sometimes more clear than *Proper* Expressions. (2.) That 'tis a great Mistake to assert, that the Lord Jesus did here make his Testament, and bequeath any Spiritual Good to the Church, which should be dispensed to it by the Apostles and their Successors; for he only gave the Church a Command to celebrate this sacred Rite in commemoration of his Death.

After these general Argumentations, they endeavour to corroborate their Opinion from the very Words of the Institution: And here they argue, (1.) From the Word *ἐσθί*, which (say they) cannot denote Bread, for then it must have been *ἐσθί*, in the Masculine Gender; therefore it signifies *σῶμα*, the Body of Christ. *Ans.* This is a common way of Expression in all Languages, and is as much as to say, *this thing*; nor could the word *this*, denote the Body of our Saviour, as not being as yet transubstantiated from the Bread. It doubtless then signified that which Christ took into his Hands. (2.) They argue from the word *ἐσθί*, *is*, which they say cannot be taken in any other but a proper Sense. *Ans.* The contrary to this appears from abundance of Passages in Scripture³, referred to in the Notes, and which may be consulted at leisure; but is most of all conspicuous in St. John's Gospel, where our Saviour styles himself *the Shepherd, the Door, the Way, the Life, and the Vine*; his Father *the Husbandman*, and his Disciples *the Branches, the Sheep, &c.*

¹ Gen. 17. 10. ² Exod. 12. 11. ³ Gen. 17. 10. & 40. 12, 18. & 41. 26, 27. Exod. 12. 11. Dan. 2. 38. Rev. 1. ult. And

And this signification is so common, that 'tis observable that the word *is*, in the *Hebrew* and *Syriac*, denotes not only a *Real*, but also and chiefly a *Representative Being*, and amounts to no more than to signify such or such a thing.

There are other of their Arguments still behind, but they are so weak that even a Novice in Religion may answer them; and therefore we shall pass them over, as not being worth our while to bestow a particular Refutation upon them.

S E C T. II.

The Opinion of the Lutherans and Contra-Remonstrants considered.

The Lutherans Opinion refuted.

As to *Luther* and his Followers, their Opinion is, that the Substance of the Bread and Wine does indeed remain in the Lord's-Supper; but since our Saviour said, *This is my Body*, they maintain that the Body of Christ is truly and really present in, with, or under the Bread, and is delivered to the Communicants, and actually eaten by them. But how the Body of Christ is there present, they say is above our Reason to comprehend, and is one of the Mysteries of the Divine Wisdom and Omnipotence. But this Notion is altogether incomprehensible, since it is inconsistent with the reality of Christ's Body, which, according to the Nature of all Bodies, is circumscribed and confined within a certain place; but Christ's Body is in Heaven, therefore it cannot be really present in the Eucharist.

The Rise of the Ubiquitarians Opinion.

They have two ways of evading the force of this Argument. *Luther* at first, carried away with the Heat of Disputation, maintained that the Body of Christ by his Session at the right hand of God was present *every where*, since God's right Hand was *every where*. This Doctrine of *Ubiquity* seems to have been borrowed from *Jacobus Faber*, who first broach'd it in the Christian World. Afterwards *Luther* relinquished this Doctrine, and founded the Presence of our Saviour's Body in the Sacrament upon the Words of

of the Institution, as did most of the *Lutherans* after him; till within a short time, by the Endeavours of *John Brent* and *James Andrews*, it was reintroduc'd with a great deal of ado into the *Lutheran Churches*, tho still oppos'd by a great many. Now the *Ubiquity* of Christ's Body is liable to many Absurdities: it is inconsistent with the Nature of a Body to be *every where*: A Body which is every where cannot be moved from place to place; nay, that which is most contrary to Reason is, that by this Doctrine there will be a Penetration of Dimensions, since our Bodies, which are *somewhere*, must needs penetrate that Body which is *every where*.

To this they object, "That there is a twofold manner of the Presence of Christ's Body, one circumscribed and Local; the other Celestial, Supernatural and Divine: That God has infinite Methods, whereby he can present to us a Body, besides that which is natural, visible and circumscribed: And that they dare not define after what manner the Body of Christ is in the Eucharist." *Ans.* (1.) We reply, that this twofold manner of the Presence of Christ is such a Contradiction as destroys it self; for 'tis Nonsense to say, that the Body which is Celestial and *every where*, is circumscribed and Local. (2.) When they say that this Presence is *real*, they determine the manner of it. But 'tis no wonder they cannot define after what manner the Body of Christ is really present in the *Lord's-Supper*, since they own that 'tis repugnant to Human Reason, and ought to be received by Faith alone. (3.) We say, that tho by the Exaltation of Christ's Human Nature to the right Hand of God many Endowments were granted to it, yet the Nature of his Body was not destroyed: For the Essential Properties of a Body, such as Extension, and being confin'd within a certain space, our Saviour in his Human Nature retain'd: But the Accidental Properties, or rather Infirmities of the Human Body, such as to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be sorrowful, with the like, he has laid aside by his being exalted to a Glorious and more Perfect State. (4.) If this manner of the real Presence were owing to the Session of Christ at the right Hand of God, then Christ in the last Sup-

Christ's Body is not every where, upon the account of his sitting at the right Hand of God.

per and in the Institution thereof did not give his own Body to be eaten, since he was not as yet exalted. And if this be true, then no Argument for the *real Presence* of Christ's Body in the Eucharist can be deduced from the Words of the Institution.

Nor upon
the account
of the
Union of
the two
Natures.

Some of the more rigid *Ubiquitarians*, to ward off this Stroke, lay the Foundation of *Ubiquity* not in the Exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God, but in the Union of the two Natures, the *Divine* and *Human*, in Christ, by which the Human Nature immediately at the first moment of Conception was advanced to the highest Dignity. For they say, that the Right Hand of God is his Omnipotence, and consequently God himself; therefore since the Body of Christ was in the very Womb of his Mother united to the Godhead, it appears that it could not afterwards be more highly exalted. But without bestowing many Arguments on the Refutation of this Opinion, we shall only say this; That it directly contradicts the Holy Scriptures, which expressly affirm, that our Saviour Jesus Christ was exalted after his Passion, and then placed on the right Hand of the Majesty on high.

There can
be no Body
but what
fills up
Space.

Others of *Luther's* Followers, who do not approve of the Doctrine of *Ubiquity*, maintain with the *Romanists*, that a Body may by the Divine Omnipotence be present, and yet fill up no Space: Since whatsoever implies not a Contradiction may be done by the Power of God; and it may without any Contradiction be said, that a Body does not fill up a Space. But who is there that is not blinded with Prejudice, but what sees a manifest Contradiction in asserting, that a Body, which is an extended and impenetrable Substance, may exist, and yet not fill up a Space commensurate to its Extension? For by this means a thing is said to be extended and not extended, which is a Contradiction *in Terminis*. As for their nice distinction betwixt Extension considered in it self, and considered with respect to Space, 'tis palpable Nonsense: For how can any Body be conceived as extended, and yet not be coextended or commensurate to the *Ubi*, or Space which it takes up? However, these *Lutherans* in defence of

[Luke 24. 26. Acts 2. 33. Philip. 2. 8, 9, 10, 11.

their Opinion stick to the literal Sense of the Words of the Institution. But having already, in refuting the Notion of the *Papists*, proved that there is a Figure in the Words, and answered all the Objections that were material, we shall not repeat what we there said, but refer our Reader to it.

A third Opinion therefore to be considered is that of *The Calvinists*, who maintain that real Bread and Wine are given and received in the Lord's-Supper, and that they are the Symbols and Signs of the Body of Christ broken, and of his Blood poured out for us. This was the Opinion of *Zuinglius*. But *Bucer*, *Calvin*, and their Followers afterwards added, that tho the Bread and Wine were received by the Corporeal Senses, yet the very Body and Blood of Christ was there really present, given and received by Faith. This seems to be a Contrivance of *Bucer*, who for Peace-sake, and that he might reconcile the *Lutherans* and *Zuinglians*, invented some ambiguous ways of speaking, to which each Party might subscribe, without prejudice done to their own Opinion. But this Endeavour proved fruitless, the *Lutherans* complained of the Trick which the *Reformed* put upon them, who took away with one Hand what they offered them with the other. And truly for the obtaining of Peace and Unity, it were better to speak properly without Ambiguity, to own their Dissent, and withal to shew that 'tis not of so great a moment as to be the occasion of a Schism or Division; than by general and ambiguous Terms to dissemble the Dissent, and then by a particular and different Acceptation of the Words to discover their Dissent afresh. For the *Calvinists* say, that the Dispute between them and the *Lutherans* is only concerning the *Mode*. This is true, but that very *Mode* makes a very wide difference of Opinions. For the *Lutherans* place the Essence of the Eucharist in this, that the Body of Christ is really and substantially present therein, and consequently is received into the Mouths of the Communicants. But the *Calvinists* say, that it is indeed really present, not substantially to our Bodies, but only to Faith, and consequently is received by it as by a Spiritual Mouth. Now this Notion of the *Calvinists* is as absurd

The Calvinists Opinion considered.

as that of the *Lutherans*. For this Communion with the Natural Substance of Christ's Body, which they maintain, is either a Communion with the Body of Christ as now reigning in Heaven, or as it is really present on Earth, and in the Celebration of the Supper. If they assert the latter, the *Ubiquity* of Christ's Body must be admitted, and then they are *Lutherans*. If the former, they affirm Contradictions; for how is it possible, that the Body of Christ which is in Heaven, and no where else (as *Beza* speaks) should be truly communicated to and eaten by us, who are on Earth, and no where beside?

Objections
answered.

But here they tell us, that our Conjunction with the Body of Christ is effected by Faith, as by a Spiritual Mouth, whereby we can render many things that are absent, present to us. *Ans.* (1.) Our Conjunction by Faith with Christ ought to precede our receiving the Sacrament, else a Man would receive unworthily; for by the Celebration thereof he testifies that he has already that Communion. (2.) They maintain that the Union which is made by Faith is expressly distinct from that which is effected in the Sacrament, which they say contains in it something more sublime and real. (3.) That Union is not incomprehensible. (4.) Faith does not make things absent to be really present, but only represents them to it self as present, when they are really absent. (5.) Lastly, our Souls can receive no Spiritual Advantage from the Communion with the very Substance of the Natural Body and Blood of Christ, especially since 'tis a Communion with a dead Body, and Blood shed, as represented in the Sacrament, and as they themselves believe to be exhibited to them.

1 Cor. 10.
16. explained.

Again, in defence of their Notion they object, that 1 Cor. 10. 16. *the Bread which we break is called the Communion of the Body of Christ, and the Cup which we drink is stiled the Communion of the Blood of Christ.* *Ans.* This is one of the Objections made by the *Papists* in defence of the *real Presence*; to which we say, that these Words cannot be taken in a proper Sense, nor can it from them be infer'd, that the Communion of the Body of Christ is really exhibited in the Lord's-Supper; but they only denote a signifying our Communion

with

with Christ. For as they who partook of the things offered to Idols, shewed that they held Communion with Devils, so we by eating Bread and drinking Wine do publicly declare that we hold Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ. Hence the Apostle makes use of this Argument to dehort the *Corinthians* from eating of things offered to Idols, and afterwards shews them how inconsistent such a Practice was with their Profession as Christians; *You cannot* (says he, ver. 21.) *drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; ye cannot be Partakers of the Table of the Lord, and of the Table of Devils.*

Thirdly, they tell us, that the Scripture does all along declare that there is an intimate Communion betwixt Christ and the Faithful, and represents it to us under various Similitudes, such as of a Vine with its Branches, of a Head with the Members of the same Body, &c. *Ans^w.* We own it; but then this Communion is not effected in the Sacrament, nor with the Body of Christ, but before the Sacrament by Faith; and it is a Spiritual Conjunction with Christ and all his Benefits, and a necessary Qualification for a Man's worthy partaking of the Sacrament. But say they, the Sacrament is a Token of our Communion with Christ, True; but from thence we conclude, that our Union with Christ precedes our partaking of the Supper: For there can be no Token or Seal ratifying and confirming a thing, unless the thing it self did already exist before.

Upon the whole matter it must be said, that only Bread and Wine are given to us in the Lord's-Supper, but that they are the Signs of the Body and Blood of Christ; because by this Ceremony of breaking Bread, and pouring out of Wine, is shadowed out to us after what manner the Body of Christ was broken, and his Blood shed for our sakes. Now whereas by this Action there is a great Similitude of the Bread and Wine with the Body and Blood of Christ, hence it is that by a usual way of speaking, the Bread and Wine are stiled the Body and Blood of Christ. No other Mystery besides this, is we think to be sought after in this Ceremony.

In what Sense Bread and Wine are called the Body and Blood of Christ.

S E C T. III.

Of the true End and Design, and of the Lawful Use of the Sacrament of the LORD'S-SUPPER.

The end of it threefold.

For the more distinct apprehension of the Nature of this sacred Ceremony, and after what manner Bread and Wine are the Symbols of the Body and Blood of Christ, the End and Design of it ought to be duly considered, which is threefold.

1. *A Commemoration of Christ's Death.*

The first and principal end of it is the Commemoration of the bloody and cruel Death of Jesus Christ, which is very well set forth by breaking of Bread, and pouring out of Wine; whereby is represented how the Body of Christ was broken, not only by scourging, by wearing a Crown of Thorns, and by being crucified, but chiefly in his Death; as also how his Blood was shed, and stream'd out of his Wounds. This Commemoration is attended with giving of Thanks for the Benefits obtain'd by the Death of Christ; and hence it is that the whole Action is called the EUCHARIST, as if the whole were employed in Thanksgiving.

2. *A Declaration of Communion with Christ.*

Another end is, a publick Declaration of our real Communion with Christ, which requires that we should be endued with a true and lively Faith in him, and that we should lead holy Lives, according to the Institutions and Precepts of our Saviour; for without Faith and Holiness, as 'tis impossible to please God, so is it also without them to have any Communion with the Lord Jesus.

3. *A publick Profession of Brotherly Charity.*

A third end is a publick Profession of brotherly Charity, whereby the Faithful partaking of one Bread testify their mutual Love and Communion with one another, as being Members of one Spiritual Body, under one Head the Lord Christ Jesus. This Declaration of Brotherly Love is to be exprest towards all such as ought to be acknowledged, according to the Rule of God's Word, as true and genuine Members of Jesus Christ. Of this number are all those, who adhering strictly to the Fundamentals of Salvation,

live

live sincerely according to the Precepts of Christ, as far as Human Frailty will permit; tho they may be subject to many and gross Errors, yet such as are not destructive of the Fundamentals of Salvation. And this we ought to do, for fear of excluding them out of our Love, and the Communion of Christ, to whom he vouchsafes Communion, and so become guilty of rashly judging our Fellow-Servants.

From these short hints 'tis plain, what sort of Qualification is required in a Christian to be a worthy Partaker of this holy Ordinance, viz. a Life answerable to the Profession which is made therein; *else he eats that Bread, and drinks that Cup unworthily, and eats and drinks Judgment to himself, because he does not discern the Lord's Body*. But whereas by this Rite we do in a peculiar manner declare our Communion with Christ, and with all the Faithful, therefore a particular Attention and Devotion of Mind is requisite, lest we prove guilty of not discerning the Lord's Body, i. e. of not making any distinction between this Repast and our ordinary Meals, and so intruding into it with Irreverence. We shall therefore briefly shew what ought to be done *before, at, and after* the Celebration of this holy Sacrament.

In the first place then, *before* the Celebration of the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, is required not only a Mind free from Sin, and endued with Brotherly Love, but also unbent from the contemplation of vile or earthly things; and also undistracted by the exercise of those Actions which are otherwise innocent and lawful: For these things disturb that devout Attention of Mind which is required in the Lord's-Supper. Nor can the Soul which is bent upon Objects relating only to this Animal Life, easily free it self from the Incumbrance of them, nor raise up its Thoughts to the due Contemplation of Heavenly and Spiritual things.

Secondly, in the Celebration it self 'tis necessary that we should duly consider the forementioned Ends of this Sacrament, and suit our selves accordingly to them. Here then is requisite; (1.) A Religious Meditation on the Death of Christ voluntarily endured for

1 1 Cor. 11. 29.

our sakes, and a religious Veneration of God the Father, and of Christ for this inestimable Benefit; which is to be expressed, both by an inward Abasement of Mind, and the outward Reverence of our Bodies, so far as can be done without Superstition. (2.) A real Possession of that, which by this Holy Action we profess to have, *viz.* Communion with Christ by a true and lively Faith, and a sincere and brotherly Love towards those who are our Fellow-Communicants, and with whom we are still ready to hold Communion. (3.) And lastly, a discerning the Lord's Body; that we may distinguish this Rite from other Vulgar Ones, and behave our selves so reverently, modestly and devoutly, as becomes those who attend at so holy an Ordinance.

3. After
the Sacra-
ment.

Thirdly, The Time immediately following the Sacrament ought to be employed in devout Meditations and religious Conferences about this Benefit we have been commemorating; that we may not return too soon to any common Discourses about our Worldly Concerns. For the Meditation of the Blessing cannot sink deep into that Mind, which is so suddenly taken up with discoursing on foreign Subjects; nor can that Soul be duly affected with the Greatness of the Benefit, that is so quickly diverted from meditating thereon. In short, throughout the whole Course of our Lives is required Obedience to the Divine Commands, and a Life answerable to our Holy Profession.

What Ex-
amination
is here re-
quired.

From these things it appears what that *Examination* is, which the Apostle requires in order to a worthy participation of the Lord's Supper, *viz.* not only a careful Inquiry into a Man's Life and Actions, whether they be conformable to the Rule of the Divine Commands; but also such an Examination whereby upon a diligent Search he does really approve of his Life and Actions as suitable to their Rule, and finds that his Mind is duly disposed for the partaking of this Ordinance. In this sense is the Word *Examina* used, Gal. 6. 4. *But let every Man prove his own Work*, i. e. approve, or find upon Trial that it ought to be approved; and then shall he have rejoicing in himself a-

alone'. And that it is to be taken in this Sense here, appears from the Apostle's own Words: since after such an Examination is made, he would have a Man to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup, which could not be done worthily unless his Actions were approved of as agreeable to the Rule of God's Word.

But here several Questions may be started: As first *Queries answered.* it may be asked, What if a Man upon such an Examination finds his Life to be disagreeable to his Profession, and polluted with various Sins, ought he notwithstanding to approach the Table of the Lord?

Ans. A Distinction ought to be made between Sins; for some are open and scandalous, others are secret. With respect to the former, especially if they have been lately committed, the Man must for a time abstain from the Sacrament, and in the mean while endeavour by the Signs of a sincere Repentance, and the Example of a more Holy Life, to make reparation for the Scandal given, and by this Method prepare himself for the worthy partaking of the Lord's Supper. If his Sins are secret, then they may be considered, (1.) Either as committed a little before the time of receiving, so that the Conscience has no Opportunity of getting rid of the Guilt thereof, in which Case it is more advisable to absent himself for that time, to repent of what is past, and to fit himself for the next Opportunity, than to intrude to the Lord's Table with so defiled a Conscience. (2.) Or else the Man has been long accustomed to Sin; in which Case he ought to enquire whether he still perseveres in any particular Vice: if he does, he is unworthy to approach that Holy Table, before he has shaken off his Sins by Repentance. But if he finds his own Heart penitent, and resolved for the future to amend what he has done amiss, then he may with some Assurance draw nigh to that Holy Ordinance.

Again, it may be asked, what ought we to say of those Men, who neglect this Ordinance through a fear of some Infirmary, supposing that there is such a Degree of Holiness required in order to the worthy Participation of the Lord's Supper, as that without

¹ *Used in the same Sense, Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 5. 10.*

it a Man would be guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ? *Answ.* This Fear is groundless; because 'tis in vain to pretend Fear in the Case; since it cannot excuse us from paying Obedience to a Divine Command, which has nothing in it that is grievous. Nay we might under the same pretence omit praying to God; since the same Qualifications are requisite for making our Addresses to him by Prayer, as for our Approaches to him in this Sacred Ordinance.

Thirdly, it may be asked whether it be safer for a Man to come to this Holy Ordinance, than to stay away out of fear of some Infirmary? *Answ.* It is much more safe to come to it, tho' the Man be not so duly prepared for it as he ought, than 'tis wholly to absent from it. For he that comes to it unworthily, is guilty indeed of not discerning the Lord's Body, and incurs some Temporal Judgment; but he who wholly absents himself is a Rebel to an express Command, and consequently deserves a sorer Punishment.

Lastly it may be demanded, What if a Man should not communicate, because he sees others come to the Table who are not Worthy, and is afraid that if he should communicate with them, he should be partaker in their Sins? *Answ.* To this we reply in short, that were we not to receive the Sacrament, or to hold Communion with any Congregation but what was perfectly free from sinful Members, we must never communicate at all, since no such Church or Congregation can be met with in the Christian World. Besides, we are too apt to pass a Censure upon others, and to pry too narrowly into their Actions, whilst we neglect what more nearly concerns us, viz. inquiring into our own State and Condition, and whether we are not guilty of the same, or more enormous Crimes, than those for which we so freely condemn others. In a word, another Man's Sins, let them be ever so great, can be no Excuse for my neglect of a known Duty that is required by God.

SECT. IV.

Some notorious Abuses of the Romanists with respect to the Lord's Supper, taken notice of.

Having in the foregoing Section considered the Du-^{The Popish}ty of every Christian in his partaking of the Lord's ^{Abuses of} Supper, we shall in this take notice of, and briefly re-^{this Sacra-}ment. ment. some of the more notorious Abuses committed by the Romanists, whereby they have destroyed the very Essence of this Ordinance, and rendered themselves guilty of very gross Idolatry.

The first Abuse is, their taking away the use of the Cup from the Laity, which was decreed in the Council of *Constance*, and afterwards confirmed in the Council of *Trent*. Contrary to this shameful Abuse we maintain, that the *entire Eucharist* under both kinds ought to be administered to all Christians, whether Seculars, or Ecclesiasticks; which is evident from the following Arguments. (1.) Our Saviour instituted and distributed the last Supper in both Kinds to all the Communicants, nay commanded that they should ALL not only eat of the Bread, but also drink of the Cup. Nor is it to the purpose to say, that Christ administered it only to the Apostles, since at that time they were not considered as Publick Ministers, but as private Believers representing the whole Body of the Christian Church. (2.) It appears from *1 Cor. 10. & 11.* beyond all contradiction, that the Apostles administered the Lord's Supper in both Kinds. (3.) The very Design of the Eucharist is a grateful Remembrance of the Death of Christ shadowed out to us by this Ceremony. Now this could not be truly and fully represented by Bread alone, but by Bread broken to denote the Body of Christ broken, and Wine poured out to denote the shedding of his Blood. (4.) The Romanists themselves maintain that, *John 6.* our Saviour speaks of the Eucharist; now in that Chapter, *Ver. 53.* our Saviour says expressly, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you:* They therefore in denying the

the Cup to the Laity, wherein is contained (according to them) the Blood of Christ, do rob them of the Means without which they cannot have Life in them. (5.) There can no satisfactory Reason be assigned for this Mutilation; and what they urge in the defence of this their Practice is so trifling, that we do not think it worth a Reply.

2. *Their changing the Sacrament into the Sacrifice of the Mass.*

Another Abuse which they are guilty of, is their turning the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper* into the *Sacrifice of the Mass*; of which this is their Opinion: That the Body and Blood of Christ being really present under the Elements of Bread and Wine, are substantially offered to God the Father, as a true propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins. But we say, that the Supper is a Duty we pay to God the Father and to Jesus Christ, thereby to testify our Gratitude for the Benefits obtained to us by the Death of Christ. If therefore any one is minded by way of Analogy to call it a Sacrifice, it will not be a *Propitiatory* one, by which we offer Christ for our Sins; but *Eucharistical*, whereby we offer up our Praises to God, and our selves as holy, living Sacrifices, acceptable in his sight. The Arguments whereby we refute the *Romanists* Opinion are, (1.) Christ is stiled 'A Priest for ever, who has a Priesthood *ἀναγέλατον*, unchangeable, or rather, which does not descend to any other: Therefore there is no Priest here upon Earth that can offer Christ; and hence it is that the Ministers of the New Testament are never called *Priests*. (2.) The Holy Penman denies that Christ could be a Priest, if he were upon Earth; therefore the Priesthood of the New Testament can no longer be performed here on Earth. (3.) The same Writer frequently tells us, that Christ was offered but once, and that by this one Oblation of himself he has for ever cleansed the Faithful from their Sins. And for this reason it is that the Sacrifice of Christ is opposed to the Sacrifices of the Old Law, which the Apostle infers to have been ineffectual upon the account of their being often repeated.

We shall not take notice of all the Arguments, whereby the *Romanists* endeavour to maintain their

The Romanists Objections answered.

¹ Heb. 7. 24. ² Heb. 8. 4. ³ Heb. 9. & 10.

Doctrine, but shall only consider such as are most considerable; which being refuted, the Answer to the rest will be easy.

In the first place then they object, That *Christ is a Priest after the Order of Melchisedec*; that *Melchisedec* offered to God Bread and Wine¹; and that Christ therefore, that he may be a Priest after his Order, offers up himself under the Elements of Bread and Wine. *Ans.* (1.) *Melchisedec* is not said to have offered Bread and Wine as a Priest, but to have brought it forth as the Friend of *Abraham* and a rich King, for the refreshment of that Patriarch and his Followers. (2.) Christ did not offer Bread and Wine, but himself. (3.) The Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, who is very accurate in comparing the Type of *Melchisedec* with Christ, and takes notice of all the Circumstances that shadow out Christ, yet makes no mention of this Type, which he would never have omitted, if it had been real.

Secondly, *Mal. 1. 11.* 'tis foretold by God, That in every place *Incense should be offered unto his Name, and a pure Offering*; which (say they) cannot be understood of any other Sacrifice besides that of the Mass. *Ans.* By a *pure Offering* the Prophet here means our *Spiritual Worship*, which is offered to God in the New Testament; it being usual for the Sacred Writers to denote our *Spiritual Worship* by some external Rite of the Law². For since those Rites were more known and visible, God by them was pleased to represent the *Spiritual Worship*, as being more abstruse and profound. And because he would have those Rites to be observed, till a more perfect *Worship* should be introduced by *Jesus Christ*, he was pleased to foretel this under the Figure of those Rites, lest the *Israelites* should neglect the Ritual *Worship* before the time came for its being abolished.

Thirdly, *Acts 13. 2.* The Prophets and Teachers are said to have ministred unto the Lord: now (say the *Romanists*) this Ministration was nothing else but a Sacrifice: since the Word *λειτουργεῖν* is used, which

¹ Gen. 14. 18. ² See to this purpose, Rom. 12. 1. Psal. 51. 19.

not only signifies the Publick Ministry ; but when placed absolutely, is always taken for the Administration of a Sacrifice¹ : And hence the *Greeks* denote their Mass by the word *λειτουργία*. *Ans.* The word *λειτουργία* denotes any sort of Publick Worship that is paid to God, and every sort of Ministration², as is likewise evident from the use of the Verb *λειτουργῶ*³, of the Noun *λειτουργός*⁴, and the Adjective *λειτουργικός*⁵. So that the meaning in the Place urged is no more than this, that the Prophets and Teachers were employed in the Publick Worship of God. Now what sort of Worship this was, cannot be deduced from the word *λειτουργεῖν*, which is of so lax and general an Acceptation, but from the Nature of the Worship it self. Since the Worship of the New Testament consists in Teaching, Prophesying, and Publick Prayers, of these must the word *λειτουργεῖν* be here understood. Nor can it be said that it denotes a Sacrifice, because the Ministration of Sacrifices under the Old Testament was signified by that Word, since no external Sacrifices are now commanded to be made under the Gospel-Dispensation.

Fourthly, They say that 1 *Cor.* 10. 18, &c. the Table of the Lord is compared with the Altar of the *Gentiles* and *Hebrews*, upon which Sacrifices were offered to God : From whence it follows that the Lord's Table is a sort of an Altar, and the Eucharist a Sacrifice. *Ans.* The Lord's Table is not here compared with the Altar of the *Gentiles*, but a Comparison is only made between the Action of those who partake of the Lord's Table, and of those who are Partakers of the Altar ; because both these testify by this their Action, that they hold Communion with that Religion, which is exercised at that Table, and at that Altar.

Fifthly, They tell us, That there has never been any Religion without an External and Visible Sacrifice ; therefore now in the Christian Religion there must needs be such a Sacrifice. *Ans.* (1.) From the

¹ As Luke 1. 23. Heb. 8. 2, 6. & 9. 21. & 10. 11.
² 2 *Cor.* 9. 12. Phil. 2. 17, 30. ³ Rom. 15. 27. ⁴ Rom. 13. 6. & 15. 16. Phil. 2. 15. Heb. 1. 7. ⁵ Heb. 1. 14.
 State

State of other Religions, which consisted of External Ceremonies, no Consequence can be drawn to affect the Christian Religion, which is of a Spiritual nature: for at this rate all the Rites of the Old Testament must be reintroduced, which have nothing to do with Christianity, as being only such Types as are destroyed by the Coming of the Substance. But (2.) We have a Sacrifice under the Gospel-Dispensation, viz. Jesus Christ the Righteous, who offered up himself once for us all.

A Third, and the most heinous Abuse which the *Papists* are guilty of, is their paying Divine Adoration to the Sacrament of the Eucharist; by which means they render themselves actually guilty of Idolatry, in worshipping a Wafer, as if it were a true God. But to prove that we have reason to charge them with Idolatry upon this account, let us take a nearer View of their Opinion. They tell us that the Sacrament of the Eucharist considered in it self ought to be worshipped, and that with a Divine Worship, since 'tis materially, if not formally, the very Christ who is our God and Saviour, and whom all Men are obliged to worship. This Inference is grounded upon the false Hypothesis of *Transubstantiation*, which we have already refuted. Since then 'tis evident that BREAD is not changed into *Very* CHRIST, they do certainly adore Bread instead of the Supreme God. As to what they say, that they do not worship a piece of Bread, but Christ himself, it is a notorious Falshood. They address their Prayers indeed to Christ, but 'tis as he is substantially present in the Eucharist; so that their Prayers are directed to the Host. Nay farther, we may with the greatest Reason charge them with Idolatry, since many of the *Romanists* themselves own, that if the real Body of Christ be not in the *Eucharist*, there cannot be a grosser piece of Idolatry committed, than what is practised in the Church of *Rome*. Now they themselves cannot be certain, from the Principles of their own Faith, that the true Body of Christ is in the Eucharist. For the Intention of the Minister, in doing what the Church does, is required as essential to *Transubstantiation*, as in all the other Sacraments; so that if such an Intention be wanting,

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no Sacrament is administred. Since then the Intention of him who consecrates is known to no Man, they must needs be in a doubt about the *Reality of Transubstantiation*, and consequently must worship they know not what. In a word, tho we should grant that which cannot and is not to be granted, *viz.* that they are not guilty of Idolatry, who being grossly deceived do believe that by worshipping the Host they worship Christ himself; yet is it unlawful for any Christian, who is better instructed in the true sense of our Saviour's Words, to testify his holding Communion with the Church of *Rome*, by partaking with her of this Rite. For such an one cannot practise this Rite without the grossest Idolatry, since he adores with Divine Worship that which he is persuaded to be only Bread, and an inanimate Creature. But above all, that Pompous and truly Idololatrical Worship of the Host, when not used in the Sacrament, which is every where predominant in the Church of *Rome*, is by no means to be excused. Of which nature is their depositing the Eucharist in precious Shrines, carrying it about and adoring of it in publick and solemn Processions, and their appointing a Festival on purpose in Honour of the *Corpus Christi*, as they term the Host. These Actions we say can by no means be excused from the Guilt of Idolatry, since the Pretence commonly urged in the Celebration of the Lord's Supper cannot here be of any weight: it is not here the Figure of Christ's Body, but Common Bread; because (as we have elsewhere hinted) the Bread and Wine do not represent the Body and Blood of Christ so much, as the whole Action, in breaking the one and pouring out the other, does. All that Worship therefore which is paid to it out of the Use of the Sacrament, is paid to mere Bread, and consequently is Idolatry.

C H A P. XXIV.

S E C T. I.

Of Works merely External, and of Human Institution.

WE shall in the several Sections of this Chapter, treat, First, of Works merely External and commanded by Men in general: Secondly, of Fasting: Thirdly, of Vows, particularly those that are *Monastical*; and Fourthly, of the Five pretended Sacraments of the *Romish Church*.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ has appointed no Rites or Ceremonies as necessary to be observed by us, besides the two already accounted for, *viz. Baptism*, and the *Supper of the Lord*. For he has redeemed us from the grievous Bondage of Ceremonies, and brought us into a State of Liberty. The Worship he prescribes us is Spiritual, for they who worship God must now worship him in Spirit and in Truth¹; and *we through the Spirit wait for the Hope of Righteousness by Faith*². In which Passages, by *Spirit* is meant the Spiritual manner of worshipping God, which proceeds chiefly from, and cannot be performed without the Spirit; in opposition to that Carnal and External Worship which is wholly exercised by the Outward Man. Not that we intend hereby to exclude all External and Bodily Worship; on the contrary we own that since Man is a Compound Being made up of Body and Soul, he cannot worship God with his Mind without expressing it by some decent and outward Acts of the Body, the one being as much subject to God, and ought to illustrate his Glory as much as the other. But what we maintain, is, that Works merely external, which may be performed by the outward Man alone without any good Motion of the Mind, are no part of our Reli-

¹ John 4. 24. ² Gal. 5. 5.

gious Worship. For 'tis notorious that these External Performances may be attended with a great show of Devotion and Zeal, and that the punctual Observance of them may, and very frequently does serve for a Cloke to a Profane and Hypocritical Mind. Hence it is that God declares himself not pleased with such a Worship¹, and ours is stiled a *Reasonable Service*², as being founded on Vertue, Equity and Reason; in opposition to the Ceremonial Worship, which being grounded on no natural Reason, is more grateful to the Flesh than to the Spirit. Add to this, that Ceremonies in Scripture are stiled *weak and beggarly Elements*³, whereby Men were trained up and prepared to a more perfect Worship; and therefore are of no use now when we are arrived to the Stature of the Fulness of Christ: They are likewise Figures of the Spiritual Worship which was to be instituted by Christ, and consequently when the Substance comes, the Shadow is to vanish away: Lastly, they were the Partition-Wall which separated between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; which being taken away by Christ, both these are, or at least should become one People: nor is there any farther use of External Ceremonies.

The Romanists restoring of Ceremonies contrary to the Genius of Christianity.

From what has been said we may perceive, how heinously the *Romanists* offend against that Liberty which we obtain by Christ, who have brought back into the Church of Christ an External and Ceremonial Worship, and make no scruple to assert that it is a part, nay a good and meritorious part of Divine Worship⁴. For were you to take a view of their whole Religion, you will find it to be merely External and wholly taken up with the Devout, or at least seemingly Devout Observation of outward Ceremonies; of which nature are their Festivals, their adorning and consecrating of Churches, their Fasts and Abstinence from Flesh on certain Days, Whipping their Bodies, muttering over their Prayers by Tale according to their *Rosary*, the Pilgrimages they make, and all those Ceremonies which are used in their Sacraments. Now what is all this but to reduce the

¹ Isa. 29. 13. Mat. 15. 8. ² Rom. 12. 1. ³ Gal. 4. 3.
⁴ Bellarm. Lib. 2. de Sacram. C. 30.

Type, when the *Antitype* is present? Nay, these Ceremonies are repugnant to the Perfection of the Gospel; since those who are grown up are brought again under a School-master to be trained up in the first Rudiments of Religion. And which is worst of all, this kind of Worship is very often destructive of true Piety. Look but into the Practice of the present Church of *Rome*, and you will see most of them lay a greater Stress on the observance of those outward Ceremonies, than on the inward Sanctity and Purity of the Mind. Hence it is that an Adulterer, a Whoremonger, and a perjur'd Person shall sooner meet with Remission, than one who eats Flesh on a Friday, or who transgresses any other Tradition of the Church.

You will ask, whether no Ceremonies may be lawfully us'd in the Church? *Ans.* Those Ceremonies, Ordinances and Traditions which are founded on merely human Invention, and which are neither implicitly commanded, nor have any relation to the Offices of those Vertues that are prescribed by God, are superstitious Rites, to which no Man who has attain'd to the Christian Liberty ought to be subject: But if true Piety be made to consist in them, if they are perform'd as necessary to Salvation, if other Men are despis'd upon the account of them, or the true Worship of God be render'd of no effect by them, then they are altogether vicious and unlawful: And to such one may very well apply the Words of our Saviour, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*¹. But the case is not the same with those Ordinances that are founded on natural Reason, and which have some relation to the Vertues commanded in Scripture. Of which nature are (1.) All those for which some sound reason can be given; such as the Precepts, Laws, and political Institutions for the Civil Life. (2.) Those which tend to preserve Order and Decency in a Family, the Church, or the Body Politick, provided they be observ'd not as Acts of true Piety necessary to Salvation, but only for Order's sake, because all things ought to be done in the Church *decently and in order*². (3.) Those

Traditions of Men how far lawful, and in what sense unlawful.

¹ Mat. 15. 8. ² 1 Cor. 14. 40.

which tho they be not commanded by God, yet ought to be look'd upon as tacitly commanded, and which the nature of the Worship we owe to God seems to require at our hands; of which nature was *David's* Intention of building a Temple to the Lord. (4.) All those things which have some Connexion with the Duty prescrib'd to us, which tend to its Perfection, and are perform'd only with a design of rendring us more apt and expedite in the Worship of God: Such are Fasting and Watching, in order to subdue our Flesh, and to make us more fervent in Prayer; as also perpetual Virginity and Celibacy, that we may not be distracted with the Cares of this World, but be more ready to do the Work of the Lord. These things are so far from being superstitious, that they do in some measure tend to the Perfection of the Christian Life.

S E C T. II.

Of Fasting.

Fasting approved of by God.

Among all the Works which relate to outward Worship, none is more eminent than that of *Fasting*, of which there is so much mention made in Scripture. In the Old Testament, God by *Moses* commanded the *Jews* to observe an Anniversary and Solemn Fast, on the tenth Day of the seventh Month, much about their Feast of Expiation. We have in Scripture not only Instances of many pious and devout Persons who fasted, but this Practice is very often recommended. Rules are prescribed for the due Performance of it, and extraordinary Gifts have been bestow'd by God on some who have fasted. From hence it must be said, that *Fasting* taken in general, if it be not a Divine Precept, yet has at least the Approbation of God. However it is not of the nature of those things which are in themselves grateful to God, but only (as all

¹ Num. 29. 7. Lev. 16. 31. & 23. 27, 29. ² Joel 1. 14. & 2. 12, 15. Mat. 17. 20. 2 Cor. 7. 5. ³ Is. 58. 5, 6, &c. Mat. 6. 16. ⁴ Acts 9. 9. & 13. 2.

other external Works are) upon the account of the End for which it is undertaken.

Fasting then in the general is a voluntary refraining *Its Nature* from Food for some certain time. It is not then a *and Ends.* necessitous Abstinence which some through Poverty are forc'd to ; nor is it Sobriety or Temperance, which is of perpetual Obligation : But it is a voluntary and extraordinary abstaining from Food, which is no otherwise acceptable to God than with respect to the End propos'd. The Ends which make *Fasting* commendable, are various. First, the subduing the Petulancy and Lust of the Flesh, that by subtracting somewhat from the Quantity of our Diet, our Minds may be the more freely dispos'd to contemplate on heavenly things, which they cannot be, so long as they are born down to sensual Objects by the weight of a pamper'd Body. Secondly, that we may be fit to pour out our Prayers with greater Fervency ; for when the Body has discharg'd it self of that Repletion which is commonly the Provocative of carnal Pleasures, the Mind is excited to a greater Ardor in Prayer : whereas by overcharging our Bodies, we incapacitate our selves as for Watching, so likewise for Praying ; and hence it is that Prayer is so frequently in Scripture ' join'd with Fasting. A third End of Fasting is, that we may by this Act testify before God the deepest Humiliation of our Souls, and own that we justly deserve to be punished, since to the regret of Flesh and Blood we deprive our selves of that Food which is otherwise grateful to us.

But as there is no external Ceremony and Rite but *Fasting* what may by the Craftiness and Wickedness of Men *consists not* be corrupted and depraved ; so with respect to *Fasting* in *abstain-* there are several Abuses crept into the *Romish Church* *ing from* which destroy the true nature of it. The first we *some cer-* shall mention is their changing it into an Abstinence *tain kinds* from Flesh, and all things else which are reputed to *of Food.* belong to Flesh ; whereas they allow Men on their Fast-days to eat often and plentifully of other Dishes, such as delicious Fish, Aromatick Roots, and to drink the Best of Wines. Now this is no true Fast, 'tis

Luk. 21. 36. Mat. 17. 20. Joel 1. 14.

D d d 4

downright

downright Superstition, and does not answer the true end of Fasting, which is to bring the Body under subjection to the Spirit; since 'tis no more than shifting one dainty Dish for another more delicious and luxurious.

Objections answered.

However they object, That in the State of Innocence, and before the Flood, the Use of Flesh-Meats was not allowed. *Ans.* This was not because Flesh was impure (for then God would not have granted the Use of it immediately after the Flood, nor would the Patriarchs have eaten it, nor would God have instituted the Celebration of the Passover by eating a Lamb) nor was it that this Abstinence from Flesh should be the Type of the Fast hereafter to be observ'd in the Church; but it was because they wanted no such Support, their Bodies being so robust, and the Earth at that time bringing forth more solid Fruits.

They farther object, that *Prov. 23. 20.* 'tis said, *Be not amongst Wine-bibbers, amongst riotous Eaters of Flesh:* and *Rom. 14. 21.* *It is good not to eat Flesh.*

Ans. But how miserably do they wrest these Places, wherein there is nothing that recommends our abstaining from Meats in the time of Fasting? *Solomon* treats of Gluttons, who by their Intemperance abuse Flesh, and joins with them the Wine-bibbers, whereas the *Romanists* do not deny the use of Wine in their Fasts. As to the Passage of *St. Paul*, they quote it by halves, for the whole Text runs thus, *It is good neither to eat Flesh nor to drink Wine, whereby thy Brother may be offended.* So that the Scandal given to a weak Brother is the occasion of *St. Paul's* saying it was not good to eat Flesh, since in the 14th Verse of the same Chapter he tells us that there is nothing unclean but to him who thinks it unclean.

Fasting abus'd when done out of Ostentation.

Since, as we observ'd before, Fasting is designed for the mortifying of the Flesh, and for the better preparing us for the Worship of God, they offend much more in this point who fast that they may be seen of Men. For neglecting the true End of Fasting, they only regard Fasting it self; nor do they endeavour to please God but Men, that they may appear to have the Sem-

balance of Holiness, whilst they are really very wicked, which is abominable Hypocrisy. Of this nature are those who fast out of custom, without any regard had to the End of Fasting, without Prayers or Humiliation or Mortification, as too many of the *Romanists* do. True it is, their Doctrine is against this Offence, but their Practice runs counter to their Doctrine.

Lastly, the greatest Abuse of Fasting is to suppose that it is conducive to the satisfying of God, and to attribute a certain intrinsic Worth and the Force of Merit to it; since all the Excellency of Fasting proceeds, as we have before observ'd, from its End. A Man properly speaking can merit nothing of God, nor make any Satisfaction for his Sin or for the Punishment due to it. However God sometimes has a gracious regard to some Actions of human Piety; not that Man satisfies God by them, but because they are grateful to God, and without them he will not grant Remission. But Fasting consider'd in it self is not of this nature, as being that which can be done with the outward Man only, without any good Intention of the Mind; but only as it is duly join'd with its End. God therefore, in regarding the Fastings of some Men, eyes and approves of the inward Humiliation of the Mind, which is join'd with and testified by Fasting.

To this they usually object the Example of the *Rechabites*, Jer. 35. 18, 19. whose Fasting was so acceptable to God, that he exempted them upon that account from the common Calamities of the *Jews* at the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. Answ. (1.) The Action of the *Rechabites* has nothing at all to do with Fasting; for it was only abstaining from Wine, from which the *Papists* do not refrain in their Fasts; and from purchasing Possessions. (2.) This their Obedience was grateful to God, as being paid to the Commands of their Father: which he has elsewhere testified his Approbation of, with a Promise of long Life annex'd to it. (3.) There is something in the Command of *Jonadab* that looks as if he were guided by the Spirit of Prophecy, by which he foresaw the future Captivity

And when reckon'd meritorious.

Objections answered.

of his People ; and therefore it is that he commanded his Sons not to purchase Possessions in that Land.

Again 'tis objected, that *Mat. 6. 18.* a Reward is promis'd by God to Fasting. *Ans.* (1.) This Reward does not denote any Merit. (2.) This Reward is only promis'd to Fasting, when it has all those Qualifications which render it commendable.

Fasts either private or publick.

All that remains is, that we should consider the various sorts of Fasts. As first, a Fast may be private, which any Man undertakes either upon a private Cause in the behalf of himself and his Family, or which a private Person freely observes for the publick Good, as *Daniel* did ; and this is fix'd to no particular time, but left to the Occasion and Discretion of him that fasts. Secondly, it may be a publick Fast appointed upon some publick Occasion by lawful Authority, which may be fix'd to such or such a certain time or day. With respect to these publick Fasts, it may be ask'd who has the Authority of appointing them, whether the Civil Magistrate, or the Governors of the Church? To this we answer, that if the Magistrate be Christian, and takes care of the Church, it is in his power, as to direct all things that relate to the Government of the Church, so also to appoint publick Fasts. But if he be an Unbeliever, and a Persecutor of the Church, or one who takes no care of it, then 'tis in the Power of the Church upon some eminent Calamity, to appoint a Fast for it self, in order to pray for some Good, or to deprecate some Evil. Just as the *Jewish* Church, when it was govern'd by its Kings, observ'd the Fasts appointed by them ; but in their Captivity, when oppress'd by the Tyranny of Heathen Princes, it prescrib'd Fasts to it self.

The Stated Fasts of Lent, Ember Weeks, &c. accounted for.

As to the *Stated Fasts* observ'd by the *Romanists*, such as *Lent*, or forty days before *Easter*, the *Ember Weeks*, or the four Seasons, and every *Wednesday* and *Friday* in the Week : These Stated Fasts, we say, as they are abus'd by them, are all superstitious. The Time before *Lent* is their *Carnival*, wherein (and indeed throughout most of the Year besides) they give themselves the Loose in all manner of Extravagancies,

if by the observation of a forty days Fast they could appease God for all their past Transgressions. or is this Fast, or any others which they pretend to keep, real; since (as we observ'd before) tho they refrain from Flesh, yet they indulge themselves in the use of other as nourishing and delicious Food. Upon the whole matter we say, that tho those Stated Fasts as Lent, the four Seasons, &c. be not commanded in scripture, but are of human Institution, and have been corrupted by the *Papists*, yet a Christian may think fit observe them; provided he proposes to himself the true Ends of Fasting, *viz.* bringing his flesh under subjection to his Spirit, humbling his soul in the presence of God, and rendring himself more fit for Prayer and other Divine Duties; provided so that he relies not too much upon this outward performance, nor presumes upon it as the proud Pharisee did, nor condemns others who cannot come up to the same pitch with him.

S E C T. III.

Of Vows, and particularly of those that are Monastical.

In treating on this Argument we shall consider, *Four things* First, what a Vow is; Secondly, upon what grounds *considera-* it may be, and is usually made; Thirdly, what *Qua-* ble. *ifications* are requisite to make it lawful and binding; and Fourthly, what the Obligation of a Vow is.

I. A *Vow* is a solemn and voluntary Promise made to *1. What a* God, whereby we tie and oblige our selves to him *Vow is.* after a peculiar manner, and this either absolutely or conditionally. Again, a Vow made to God is either, (1.) *General*, whereby we sincerely and with a pious Affection devote our selves and all we have to him, that he may dispose of us and ours as he pleases. Of this nature was the former part of *Jacob's Vow*, in saying that *the Lord should be his God*; and such is the Vow made by all Christians at their Baptism, and repeated

¹ Gen. 28. 22.

every time they partake of the Lord's Supper. Else, (2.) 'tis *Special*, when any thing is vowed to God after a singular and special manner. Of this nature was the latter part of *Jacob's Vow*¹; and of such also is his, who vows to clothe so many Poor, or to bestow such a Sum upon them every Month. For tho' the Word of God prescribes Alms-giving, yet does it not express the particular Measure thereof. In a Vow itself there is no worshipping of God, since a Man (viz. in *Special Vows*) obliges himself to that, to which he was not obliged before he had made the Vow. However it may be made lawfully, and become a greater Motive of serving God.

2. Upon grounds made.

II. A lawful Vow is usually made for these Reasons (1.) Out of a fear or sense of some Evil, which would have God to divert from us. (2.) For the obtaining of some Benefit at his hands, of which nature was the Vow of *Hannah* and *Jephthah*². (3.) For testifying our Gratitude for some Mercy received. (4.) For the mortifying of the Flesh, and avoiding of Temptations; as if an intemperate Man, who finds himself inclined to Luxury and Drunkenness, should vow to abstain from such Meats and Drinks as he knows to be Incitements thereto.

3. Its Qualifications.

III. The Qualifications requisite to make a Vow lawful and obligatory are these; (1.) It must be made to God³, and not to Saints (as the *Romanists* do) for this is to ascribe an Honour to them which is due to God alone. (2.) They must be made voluntarily, not by constraint, and by Persons who are Masters of themselves. (3.) The things vowed must be such as may be lawfully vowed, not Trifles or Impossibilities much less Sins; of which last was the Vow of those forty Conspirators, who had bound themselves with an Oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had kill'd *Paul*⁴. (4.) Vows ought not to be made rashly, such as was *Jephthah's Vow*⁵; and such are the Vows of all those who bind themselves to the performance of that which they cannot tell whether they are able to perform or not.

¹ Gen. 28. 23. ² 1 Sam. 1. 11. Judges 11. 30. ³ Job 1. 16. ⁴ Ps. 50. 14. & 76. 12. ⁵ Acts 23. 12. ⁶ Judg. 11. 30.

IV. 'Tis at any Man's liberty to make a Vow, but when 'tis made it must of necessity be perform'd, since 4. *Its Obligation.* Vows oblige the Conscience, and cannot be dispens'd with without Sin. No question can be made but that general Vows oblige the Conscience; and as to special ones, they oblige so far and so long as they have all the Qualifications of a lawful Vow. Wicked Vows are not binding, nor are they to be fulfilled, for they cannot be the Obligations of Sin; and such as in process of time become prejudicial to the Edification of others, and to our own Health, or are impossible, ought not to be fulfilled. Except in these cases, every Vow is binding.

From what has been said, one may easily perceive what Judgment ought to be pass'd on the *Monastical Vows of the Romanists*. They vow three things; *Continence*, which is rather *Celibacy*, than pure and undissol'd Chastity: *Poverty*, which consists in enjoying nothing *de proprio*, but holding all things in common with the Fraternity to which they belong: And *Obedience*, by which they oblige themselves to obey their Provincial, General, Abbot, or Prior, in whatsoever he shall command them. They will not indeed maintain that these three Precepts are Divine, but are only *Counsels of Perfection*; by which they mean a Work not commanded, but shewn and recommended by Christ, and which they distinguish from a Precept, (1.) In the *Matter*, which is more difficult in the Counsel, and easier in the Precept; good in the latter, but better in the former. (2.) In the *Subject*, the Precept affecting all Men, the Counsel only those who can bear it. (3.) In the *Form*; the Precept obliges by its own Force, but the Counsel is in a Man's own power. (4.) In the *End*: the Precept if observ'd has a Reward; if not observ'd, a Punishment annex'd to it: whereas if the Counsel be not followed, no Punishment attends it; but if it be, it has the greater Reward.

From this account we infer, First, that the *Monastical Vows* are not of God, as pretending such things to be grateful to him, which he has by no Precept, according to the Papists own Confession, declar'd to be acceptable in his sight. Nay, they are contrary to the Gospel, wherein our Saviour tells

The Monastical Vows of the Papists consider'd.

Proved not to be of God.

tells us', *When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable Servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.*

They are rash.

Secondly, we infer that these Vows are rash, since they lay such a restraint upon our Liberty as may prove a Snare to us; which is easy to shew in each of these Vows. (1.) As to the Vow of *perpetual Chastity*, this is a Gift which is said not to be given to every Man; therefore an Impossibility ought not to be vowed. For what if a Man after his Vow cannot preserve his Chastity, does he not ensnare himself? O, say they, he must fast and pray. But supposing he does this, and finds himself not proof against Temptations, or at least is distracted with lustful Thoughts and Desires, what must he do then? Does not the Apostle say that *it is better to marry than to burn*? (2.) As to the Vow of *wilful Poverty*, God may also be tempted thereby, and the Man be expos'd to the danger of falling into various Sins, such as Distrust, Injustice, and other wicked Methods. (3.) Their Vow of *Obedience* makes them the Slaves of Men, and robs them of that Liberty which they have obtain'd in Christ. And what can bespeak a more servile Spirit, than to submit entirely not only to a fallible Man like themselves, but to one who sometimes makes an ill use of his Authority; to be so much at the Nod of a Superior, as not to enquire into the Justice and Equity of his Commands, even when they are diametrically opposite to Vertue; or to refuse Obedience thereto?

And of mischievous Consequence.

Lastly, these Vows are very prejudicial. The Vow of *Chastity* has been the occasion of many Leudnesses and Debaucheries; committed by Persons who have not sufficiently try'd themselves, and afterwards found themselves incapable of keeping to their Vow. The Vow of a *feigned Poverty* has introduc'd a great many strong and lazy *Abbey-Lubbers*, who live richly upon the Liberality of others, are a Burden to the Commonwealths where they are, and rob the real Poor of that Charity which is due to them. From the Vow of *Obedience* have many Villanies proceeded; the assassinating of Emperors and Kings; whilst they are

¹ Luk. 17. 10. ² Mat. 19. 11. ¹ Cōr. 7. 7. ³ 1 Cor. 7. 9. bound

ound blindly to obey the Commands of their Super-
ior: as some Experiences of late have sadly convinc'd

S E C T. IV.

Of the five pretended Sacraments of the Romish Church.

Among External Works of *Will-Worship*, we may *The five*
justly reckon the five Sacraments which the *Romanists* pretended
have superadded to the two Sacraments instituted by *Sacra-*
our Saviour. We do not deny but that some of their *ments of*
rites may be piously and profitably made use of, pro- *the Roma-*
vided it be without Superstition, and an Opinion of *nists ex-*
Divine Worship; but others we affirm to be fictitious, *amin'd.*
and invented by Men for the supporting of Supersti-
tion, and that the Title of *Sacrament* is falsely applied
to all of them, as if they confer'd Grace after a singu-
lar manner. This will farther appear by taking a di-
stinct view of each of them.

The first of their pretended Sacraments is CON-
FIRMATION, which follows *Baptism*; which *I. Confir-*
Rite consists in these Particulars. The baptized Per-
son is anointed by the Bishop with the *Holy Chrism*,
(a Mixture of consecrated Oil and Balsam) adding
these Words, *I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and*
confirm thee with the Chrism of Salvation, in the Name
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
Besides, the Bishop strikes the Person confirm'd, and dis-
misses him with the Peace of God, &c. It differs from
Baptism in this, that by Baptism Men are born to a new-
ness of Life; but by *Confirmation* they who are already
regenerated, become Men in Christ Jesus; therefore
(say they) *Confirmation* confers a new Virtue, if there
be nothing to hinder the Efficacy of the Sacrament.
To this purpose they alledg those Places of Scripture
wherein mention is made of the Effusion of the Holy
Ghost, and the Imposition of Hands, viz. That our
Saviour promised the Holy Ghost; that he anointed

¹ Joh. 14. 16. & 15. 26. & 15. 13. Acts 15.

the Faithful therewith¹; and that the laying on of the Apostles Hands was the outward and visible Sign thereof, by which Action the Holy Ghost was confer'd².

In what
Sense to be
allowed of.

As for our parts, we freely grant, that since *Infant-Baptism* has been of general Usage, some Rite may be piously used, as a publick Profession before the Church, by which we ratify our Baptism administred to us in our Infancy, and solemnly renew the Vow of Obedience then promised in our Name. But to attribute any special Holiness or spiritual Efficacy to that Rite, or to make it a new Sacrament distinct from Baptism, favours of Superstition. The Promises of the Holy Ghost mentioned in St. *John's* Gospel and in the *Acts*, relate only to the Apostles, and to that extraordinary and visible Descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of *Pentecost*; from whence no general Promise can be inferred. However we do not disown, but that elsewhere there is such a general Promise of the Holy Ghost, by the Power of which the Faithful are enabled to withstand the Devil in their Spiritual Warfare; but this is not to be obtained by an external Chrism, but by Prayer. As to the Imposition of Hands, tho it was practised by the Apostles, yet did it not as an Instrument confer the Gift of the Holy Ghost *ex opere operato*; since the Holy Ghost was always bestowed according to the wise Dispensation of God. And whereas at present that visible Distribution of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost is ceased, it is ridiculous still to make use of that Rite as a Sign and Instrument thereof. However if that superstitious Notion, whereby 'tis believed that the Gift of God is annexed to the outward Ceremony, be not insisted on, it may for Order and Decency's sake be used, as an external Sign marking out the Person whom we recommend to God in our Prayers, and on whom we desire that God would bestow his Benediction.

2. *Penance.*

Another fictitious Sacrament is *PENANCE*, which the *Romish* Doctors consider either as 'tis a Virtue, or as 'tis a Sacrament: in order to refute their Errors about which, 'twill be only necessary to take

¹ 2 Cor. 1. 21. 1 Joh. 2. 27. ² Acts 8. 17. & 19. 6.
notice

notice of their Opinion in this matter. They say then that *Penance* (for that Word they rather chuse to use than *Repentance*) being declared by outward Signs with the Word of Absolution, is a Sacrament. By *Penance* they mean, that particular Repentance whereby a Man already converted to Christ repents of those Sins into which he falls after Conversion: And this they make to consist of two parts: (1.) The Matter of it, including Contrition, Auricular Confession, and Satisfaction. (2.) The Form, which is the Absolution of the Priest uttered by these Words, *I absolve thee*. Of each of these we shall treat briefly.

There is none can deny, but that *Contrition*, or a serious Sorrow for Sins committed, is requisite. But what they require as an adequate Proportion betwixt the Sin and the Sorrow for it, is absurd; since according to their own Notions there is neither an Intensive nor an Extensive Equality. We ought indeed to turn to God with all our Hearts; but withal the Scripture teaches us, that Remission of Sins is obtained gratuitously of God. Besides, they are mightily to blame, in that they make the Effect of Contrition (how sincere soever) viz. Remission of Sins, to depend on the Priest's Absolution, or at least his Wish.

The Romanists Opinion of Contrition.

As to *Confession* we own, that confessing our Sins to God is a necessary part of Repentance; and if we have injur'd our Neighbours, a publick Acknowledgment ought to be made; and in the Case of publick Scandal given, a publick Confession of the Offence ought to be made in the Face of the Church, that the Ministers and other Godly Persons may by their Prayers intercede for us. But besides these, the *Romanists* require a particular account to be given to the Priest of all the Sins we may have committed, as necessary for the Remission of them. But this is a mere Human Invention, neither commanded in Scripture, nor practised by Christ and his Apostles; and is of very dangerous Consequence to the Souls of Men, invented only to gratify the Avarice and Ambition of the Priests. For if Remission of Sins can be so easily obtained, as by the bare Confession of them to, and the Absolution of the Priest, what an Encouragement is there given for the Sinner to sin on securely,

Of Auricular Confession.

since he can escape at so cheap a rate? Add to this, that the Priests by virtue of this *Auricular Confession* insinuate themselves into the Secrets of all Men, nay even into the Breasts and Cabinet Councils of Princes, and by this means make them all to stand in awe of them, since they can when they please betray all their Secrets, and so ruin them.

And of Satisfaction. As to the *Satisfaction* which they pretend is made by *Penance*, they tell us, that it consists in some External Acts, such as Fasting, Prayer, Alms-giving, &c. imposed by the Father Confessor, by which the Temporal Punishment due to Venial Sins is remitted; or in purchasing of Indulgences at a stated Price. But if any Person die before Satisfaction is made, or Indulgence obtained, they must make Satisfaction in Purgatory after Death. For the Redemption of such miserable Souls out of the Pains of Purgatory, they say, that the Pope has a Treasury of Works of Supererogation perform'd by many Saints, and the Overplus of our Saviour's Sufferings, which he can dispense as he pleases, and by virtue of which he can grant Indulgences to the Souls in Purgatory upon the payment of a Sum of Mony. Now the bare mention of this Doctrine, is enough to shew how ridiculous it is; but besides that, the Principles on which it is founded are false. For the very Notion of *Works of Supererogation* is groundless: It supposes that some Men may by their good Works, not only merit Salvation for themselves, but likewise lay in a Store for making Satisfaction for others: And it likewise supposes that our Saviour suffered more than was necessary for the Redemption of Mankind. Both which Suppositions are false, and contrary to the plain Words of Scripture.

3. Extreme Unction.

The third pretended Sacrament of the *Romanists* is **EXTREME UNCTION**; which is only applied to sick Persons that are at the point of Death. This Unction is made of Oil of Olives, by which the Organs of Sense are anointed, with this Form pronounced by the Priest, *May God by this holy Unction, and out of his most tender Mercy, grant unto thee Pardon for all thy Offences committed by Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching; Amen.* The Effects of this Sacrament they suppose to be, restoring Health to

to the Body if it be consistent with the Salvation of the Soul, and taking away all the Remains and Defilements of Sin. As for our parts, we freely own that the Rite of anointing the Sick, which was a Sign and Symbol of their miraculous Cure, was appointed by Christ, practised by the Apostles, and for some time used in the Primitive Church; not as a Sacrament conveying Spiritual Grace, as the *Papists* imagine, nor as a means of working a miraculous Cure; but only as an external Sign, representing as it were to our Eyes that Cure. Since then the Gifts of miraculous Healing are ceased, 'tis plain that this Symbol is no longer necessary, nay cannot be observ'd without Superstition in the Church.

The principal and only place of Scripture on which James 5. they found their Extreme Unction, is Jam. 5. 14, 15. ^{14, 15.} *Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with Oil in the Name of the Lord: And the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed Sins, they shall be forgiven him.* But what has this Office, prescribed here by the Apostle to the Sick and to the Elders of the Church, to do with the Extreme Unction of the *Papists*? For (1.) here is no mention made of the Parts to be anointed, nor is any Form of Words prescribed. (2.) It plainly refers to *Mark* 6. 13. or at least to the Rite there specified: But the Unction there express'd, is not (according to *Bellarmino's* own Confession) Sacramental, but only a Symbol of a miraculous Cure. (3.) The Apostle speaks of a Corporeal Cure, which not being at present successful, this Rite is very insignificant. (4.) St. *James* does not attribute Health to the anointing with Oil, but to the Prayer of Faith. (5.) The Extreme Unction of the *Romanists* is directly contrary to the Anointing recommended by the Apostle, who would have the Sick to be anointed in order to their Recovery, whereas they never administer it till Persons are given over as irrecoverable.

The fourth Sacrament to which the *Romanists* pretend, 4. *Holy* is that of Ordination of Ministers, or Holy Orders. This they make to consist in the laying on of Hands, made use of in the Consecrating of Persons to the

Ministry of the Church, and in pronouncing a certain Form of Prayer, that justifying Grace and an indelible Character may be conferred upon them. We indeed acknowledg that this Ceremony of laying on of Hands may be observed for the sake of Order and Decency; that the Ordination of Ministers is duly performed by Prayers recommending them to God; that the Imposition of Hands is an antient Custom, and practised not only in the Benedictions of the Patriarchs, but also in the ordaining of Ministers and setting them apart for some special Office¹. This was a Symbol of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon them by Christ; and hence we find in the *Acts*, that the Holy Ghost was given to the Believers at the laying on of the Apostles Hands. However, tho God in those extraordinary Calls bestow'd such Gifts upon Men; yet it cannot from thence be inferred that in the ordinary Vocation these Gifts are bestowed, since no Promise of any such thing is extant in Scripture. God in calling Ministers extraordinarily, rendered them himself immediately fit for that Duty: But in the ordinary way, they who are themselves capable of that Office, ought to be called to it.

5. Marriage.

The fifth Sacrament added by the *Romish Church*, is Marriage. Concerning this Sacrament, they are very much divided in their Opinions; some deny it to be a Sacrament, others say 'tis peculiar to the Faithful, and others that 'tis common to them and Infidels. Again, some maintain that it was a Sacrament to the Believers under the Old Testament; whilst others pretend that it was advanced to this Dignity by Christ. We have elsewhere observed that Matrimony was appointed by God, and had his Blessing annexed to it; but how it comes to be a Sacrament we cannot imagine. For it is so far from being either peculiarly Christian, or generally necessary to Salvation (as all true and proper Sacraments ought to be) that as it is common to Heathens, so it is strictly forbidden to all the Ecclesiasticks in the Church of *Rome*, and the Monks are reckoned a more holy sort of Persons, who make Vow

¹ See to this purpose 1 Tim. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Acts 6. 8. & 13. 3.

against it, and in their own Opinion renounce a Sacrament.

CH A P. XXV.

Of some necessary Qualifications of our Christian Duty.

HITHERTO we have treated of the Precepts of our Saviour Jesus Christ, wherein our Duty as Christians is comprized: All that remains for us to do, is to consider some necessary Qualifications which relate to the whole of our Christian Duty; and may be reduced to these three, the Necessity, and Possibility of performing it, and our Constancy or Perseverance therein. These with some other things shall be the subject Matter of the several Sections of this Chapter.

S E C T. I.

Of the Necessity of observing the Precepts of our Saviour.

It is very requisite that we should in the first place discourse of the Necessity of obeying the Commands of Christ; since without this, all that we have hitherto said concerning the Divine Precepts and the Vertues of a Christian would be fruitless and to no purpose. But that the Necessity thereof may farther appear, it will not be amiss to explain a little more distinctly the manner of obeying the Precepts of Christ; which will admit of a threefold View. (I.) According to the Act of highest Perfection, when a Man after he has repented seriously of his past Sins, and conceived a true Faith in Christ Jesus, falls into no Sin at all, either in Thought, Word or Deed; but is continually employed in the Study and Practice of Piety and Vertue. This perfect Degree of Obedience is not required by our Saviour, as being impossible to us whilst

1. The Necessity of it.

we live here below, and is only suited to the Angelick Nature, and to the Souls of just Men made perfect. (2.) According to Inclination and Affection; as when a Man is sincerely inclined to the observation of the Divine Precepts, and tho he meditates upon and does many things even relating to the Affairs of this Life, yet neither thinks nor acts any thing contrary to the Commands of God. (3.) According to the Habit; when a Man is endued with a Habit of Vertue, and is so accustomed to the observation of the Divine Precepts, that upon every Opportunity that offers he exerts his Obedience. These two last Degrees of obeying the Precepts of our Saviour we look upon to be necessary.

But whereas no Man can sincerely be inclined to Vertue, unless he bid a hearty adieu to his Sins, this Inclination to and Habit in Vertue requires, (1.) That a Man should break off all Habits and Customs of sinning, as being inconsistent with Habitual Vertue. (2.) That he should industriously avoid every voluntary Act of Sin, which proceeds not from In-cogitancy or Surprise, but from a deliberate Mind, since every deliberate Act of Sin is inconsistent with a sincere Love and Habit of Vertue.

*This Ne-
cessity pro-
ved by se-
veral Ar-
guments.*

This Necessity of obeying the Commands of Je-
sus Christ, is evinced by the following Arguments:
(1.) By the expresse Testimony of several Passages in
Holy Writ, wherein 'tis asserted that no Man can attain
to Salvation without the observation of them'. (2.)
Because God has expressly said, *That he will judge us
according to our Works, and that he will recompense to
every Man according to what he has done in the Body,
whether it be Good or Bad*'. (3.) Because unless we
keep the Commandments of our Saviour, we can have
no Fellowship with God the Father and our Lord Je-
sus Christ'. (4.) Because not only Faith, comman-
ded by Jesus Christ, is necessary to Salvation; but e-
ven that without keeping the rest of his Command-

¹ Mar. 5. 19, 20. & 7. 21. Rom. 8. 12, 13. Heb. 12.
14. ² Mat. 16. 27. & 25. 31, &c. Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, &c.
2 Cor. 5. 10. Gal. 6. 7, 8. ³ 1 John 1. 6, 7.

ments is not available to Salvation, but is a dead and ineffectual Faith.

We know of no Man that openly opposes the Necessity of obeying the Precepts of Christ; nor would such an one easily meet with any Admirers of his Doctrine. However, many there are who by their erroneous Doctrines do really subvert it; we shall point out some few of them. (1.) Of this nature is the Doctrine of those Men, who maintain that good Works are not requisite for our holding Fellowship with God, but only as Signs by which we are assured that we are in Communion with him. Now this Doctrine destroys the Necessity of Holiness; since if without it we have already Fellowship with God, what occasion is there of our being united to him by it? (2.) Of the same stamp are they, who maintain the Doctrine of absolute Election and Reprobation, depending on the mere Will and Pleasure of God, without any regard had to Faith and good Works, or to Infidelity and Wickedness: Because (as we shewed before) by this Doctrine all endeavours after Holiness, and avoiding of Vice, are rendred useless and insignificant. (3.) To the same purpose tends their Doctrine, who teach us that the true Believer and Regenerate, tho he may fall into many Sins, yet cannot totally and finally fall from the Faith, and miss of Salvation. For from hence it follows, that a Believer not only with respect to the present, but also to the future time, is assured of his Salvation, and that no Sins how enormous and lasting soever can hinder him from obtaining it: And consequently God will take care that he falls into no mortal Sin, or if he does, will not suffer him to die in it, but will by his effectual Grace work Repentance in him for the plenary Pardon of all Sins. Thus the Man depends on the omnipotent Operation of God, and need not trouble himself about the Practice of Piety. (4.) Of the same pernicious Consequence is their Doctrine, who tell us that a Man may be justified by Faith alone, without any good Works; and who place this Faith in the sole Application of the Merits of Jesus Christ, by

Several Doctrines that overthrow this Necessity.

^a Jam. 2. 14, & 25.

which they believe that Christ not only made a plenary Satisfaction for their Sins, and was punished in their stead; but did also fulfil the Law of God for them, and that the Righteousness performed by Christ is imputed by the Father to them, as much as if they themselves had kept the Law. Now if this be found Doctrine, where is the Necessity of obeying God? For if Christ has thus satisfied for us, we may not only be justified, but also be saved without any Righteousness of our own. (5.) Of the same kind are they who pretend that our Obedience must needs be imperfect in this Life, since 'tis impossible to keep the Divine Commands; for no Man supposes himself obliged to what is impossible; and the Impossibility of performing a Duty commanded, is the greatest and most reasonable Excuse in the World for not doing it. (6.) And lastly, they destroy this Necessity, who deceiving themselves with an idle Notion of the boundless Mercy of God, apply Salvation to themselves, tho they are so far from living holily, that they indulge themselves in sensual Pleasures. For these Men form to themselves a merciful Deity, without any Notion of his Justice; whereas the Scriptures would tell them that he is as just in punishing the Obstinate, as he is merciful in pardoning the Penitent.

*Our Works
not meri-
torious of
Salvation.*

With respect to this Necessity of our Obedience, a Question may be raised, *viz.* Whether our Good Works merit Eternal Life? This Point is controverted between the *Protestants* and *Romanists*, which latter do avowedly own Good Works to be meritorious. As for our parts we grant, that if the word MERIT be not taken in a strict but large Sense, the good Works of the Faithful may in some measure be called MERITS, because God has graciously promised to reward them with Eternal Life, and therefore by virtue of his Promise he may in some sense be said to be a Debtor to those who perform their part of the New Covenant. But whereas this is not the most proper Signification of the word *Merit*, and the *Papists* do not acquiesce therein, but maintain that our Works by their intrinsic Value merit Eternal Life; it is better in our Opinion not to make use of that Word, since it may seem to imply Merit properly so called; where-

as

as if we enquire more closely into the Nature of Merit, and consider what things are requisite to make a Work meritorious, we shall plainly perceive that all those Qualifications are wanting in our Works, and consequently they cannot merit Eternal Life.

S E C T. II.

Of the Possibility of keeping the Commandments of Jesus Christ.

The Possibility of keeping the Commandments of our Saviour, is taken for granted by what has been said of the Necessity thereof; since things necessary must be observed, but Impossibilities cannot. But for the due discussing of this Point, the State of the Question is brought in the first place to be laid down.

There is a threefold Opinion at present concerning the Possibility of observing the Precepts of Christ by the Assistance of God's Grace: For as to the Opinion of *Pelagius*, That a Man might by his own Strength fulfil the whole Law of God, we shall say nothing about it, since 'tis at present exploded by all Men, and has no one Advocate that we know of. The first Opinion then, which we shall mention, is that of those who maintain, that a Man may by the Grace of God arrive to such a Degree of Perfection, as not to be tempted to Sin by any, even the first Motion of Concupiscence; or be affected with any Love to the Creature, so as to love God for his own sake only, without any regard had to a Reward. A second Opinion is that of those Persons, who tell us, that the Law of God requires of Man an Obedience altogether perfect, as to its Parts, Duration and Degree, by the Merit of which he may attain Eternal Life: But that Man, by our first Parents Transgression imputed to all his Posterity, is rendred incapable of fulfilling the Law, and therefore finds his own Righteousness in the Righteousness of Christ, who did fulfil the Law: That therefore a Man cannot keep the Commandments of God, even tho he be assisted by the Grace of God, and regenerated by the Spirit of Christ;

Christ; but that all his Perfection consists in a Complacency in, and a Resolution of Perfection, and in a constant acknowledgment of our Imperfection, with an expectation of being rendred perfect in the World to come. The middle Opinion between these two Extremes is our own, *viz.* That a Man may by the Assistance of God's Grace, keep the Precepts commanded in the Gospel, after such a manner, and in such a degree of Perfection, as God requires of us under the denunciation of Eternal Damnation. The two first Opinions run counter to each other; the one makes the Way to Eternal Life too Narrow, the other too Broad; the one would have us endued with that Perfection which is only to be had in the other World, whilst the other puts off to that time the Perfection which we may here obtain.

The first Opinion rejected.

We have no need to labour much at the refuting the first Opinion, since its own Absurdity is enough to overthrow it. They would have a Man to be free from the least Temptation to Sin, even from the very first Motions of Concupiscence, which are natural and unavoidable: And they believe it to be unlawful to obey God in hopes of a Reward; which may move some Persons to Despair, and takes off that Motive to Obedience which God himself is pleased to prescribe to us. For the Love of any Good cannot be eradicated, but by the Expectance and Love of a contrary Good; nor can the Love of earthly and sensual Objects be removed, but by our Love of Spiritual and Heavenly Things.

The Controversy betwixt the 2d and 3d Opinions stated.

All then that we need to do, is fairly to state the Controversy between the second and third Opinions; which seems wholly to turn upon these two main Questions. (1.) Whether the Law of God, even according to the Gospel, requires of a Man a perfect and absolute Obedience, which shall not be subject to the least failing? Or whether God, as a tender Father, may not use some Indulgence, and abate of the Rigour of the Law? (2.) Whether a Man can observe and perform the Law as he is requir'd in the Gospel? Or whether he can only discharge the beginnings of Obedience, his Regeneration beginning in this Life, and consummated in the next? Now whoever daily

uly considers each Branch of this Matter in dispute, will perceive that there is not much difference between these two opposite Opinions, and that it lies more in the Circumstances than in the Thing it self. But whereas the whole Controversy cannot be so easily adjusted as could be wished, it will not be improper to treat a little more particularly about it.

As to the first Question then we say, That God in the Gospel does not exact such a strict, perfect, absolute and sinless Obedience, as to threaten Destruction and Eternal Damnation to all those who shall be guilty of any the least Offence: But that he treats us like an Indulgent Father, and tho he does not approve of the Failings of the Faithful, yet he is graciously pleased to forgive them to those who sincerely seek him and repent of their Sins. For God under the New Covenant requires Repentance, and not a sinless Obedience, upon which he promises Remission of Sins. Now Repentance presupposes Sin, nor does it for the future wholly exclude the committing all Acts of Sin, since a vicious Habit cannot be conquered in a moment: and hence the Man, especially in his entrance on a Christian State, is subject to Relapses; against which if he makes continual struggles, he will by degrees master them, and make every day a farther Progress in a Religious Course.

However there are many Objections started by Men of the contrary Opinion, which we shall consider and answer. First, they object that God is perfectly just, and consequently cannot allow of any other Righteousness but what is altogether perfect. *Objctions answered.*
Ans. (1.) God is indeed just, but withal an absolute Sovereign, subject to no superior Being; therefore he may recede from his Right, and not rigidly exact whatever he might in Justice require, but prescribe a Law mixed with some Grace and Indulgence. (2.) The Obedience which God requires under the denunciation of Everlasting Punishment is perfect, as being correspondent to the Stipulation contained in the Divine Covenant; without performing of which a Man cannot obtain Salvation: But if the Man performs it, God as a Righteous Judge, without any violation of his Justice, may and really will adjudge Salvation to him.

Se-

Secondly, They say, the Law requires such an Obedience as was due from Man before the Fall, i. e. an entirely perfect one; since it requires Obedience with all the Strength, *viz.* such a Strength as Man had in his State of Innocence. *Answ.* From whence does it appear, that when God requires Obedience with all our Strength, he means such an Ability as Man was endued with before the Fall? This is therefore said *gratis*, and without any manner of Proof: nay, this would be repugnant to the Righteousness and Justice of God, if he should require Obedience proportionable to that Strength which our first Parent, and with him (according to their Tenets) all his Posterity lost by the Fall, and which God never restored to them. This would look as oddly as it would in a Prince to demand a Grandson to maintain such a Number of Troops with his Estate, of which that Prince had before deprived his Grandfather.

Again they object, that Christ commands us to be perfect, as our Father in Heaven is perfect. *Answ.* They will not venture surely to assert that here is any Equality, but only a Likeness of Perfection prescribed, *viz.* That we should sincerely endeavour after Holiness, even as God himself is Holy. Whosoever then does heartily forsake his Sins, and is ready to obey God in all things that he does or can know to be his Duty, is perfect as God is perfect.

The Controversy about the Possibility of obeying the Precepts of Christ stated.

As to the second Question, in order to the due stating thereof we say, that the same Degree of Obedience which we shewed to be necessary to Salvation, is also possible for a Faithful and Regenerate Man to perform, *viz.* not a sinless or absolutely perfect Obedience, but such as consists in a sincere Love and Habit of Piety, which excludes all Habit of Sin, with all enormous and deliberate Actions. But since there are three Degrees of regenerate Persons, *viz.* Beginners, who sincerely repent of their Sins, tho' the struggling against them is somewhat difficult; Proficients, who with less Trouble and greater Alacrity resist Sin; and perfect Persons, who have already subdued the Habit of Sin, and take a delight in the Practice of Vertue: we think it proper to explain our Opinion a little more distinctly. 'Tis plain that it is necessary for all Men,

Men, in order to be partakers of Everlasting Salvation, that they should at least attain the first degree of Regeneration, since without it there is no Salvation. But if after they have attained it, they should immediately die, no question but according to the Terms of the Gospel they will be saved. But if their Lives should be spared they must aspire to the second, and so on to the third degree of Regeneration; since God requires the Love of our whole Man, which cannot be regular unless we proceed from one degree of Perfection to another. For the maintaining of this our Opinion we shall make use of the following Arguments. (1.) God requires an Obedience to his Commands, annexing Salvation to the Performance, and threatening Eternal Punishment to the Non-performance of them; therefore it is possible, for else God would be unjust in requiring Impossibilities of Men. (2.) The Commandments of God are so far from being impossible, that they are denied to be grievous; nay, our Lord himself assures us, that his Yoke is easy, and his Burden is light. (3.) St. *John* assures us, that a regenerate Man may arrive to such a degree of Perfection, as not only not to sin, but even to be incapable in some sort of sinning. (4.) It is said of some in Scripture, that they are perfect. (5.) The Apostles themselves in their *Epistles* frequently wish that the Faithful might attain to Perfection; now these Desires would have been to no purpose, had the Apostles wished Impossibilities. (6.) There are several Instances mentioned in Scripture of Persons who sought the Lord with their whole Heart, and obeyed the Lord faithfully, such as *David*, *Asa*, *Josiah*, *Zecharias* and *Elizabeth*. (7.) And lastly, the contrary Opinion is very destructive of Piety, and renders all our Exhortations to it insignificant.

But now let us hear what the Maintainers of the contrary Opinion have to say for themselves. In the

Objections answered.

¹ 1 John 5. 3. ² Mat. 11. 30. ³ 1 John 3. 9. & 5. 18. ⁴ 1 Cor. 2. 6. Phil. 3. 15. ⁵ 1 Thess. 5. 23. Phil. 1. 9, 10, 11. Col. 1. 9, 10. Heb. 13. 20, 21. ⁶ 1 Kings 11. 34. & 14. 8. ⁷ 1 Kings 15. 11. 2 Chron. 15. 17. ⁸ 2 Kings 22. 2. 2 Chron. 34. 2. ⁹ Luke 1. 6.

first place then they tell us, that there are some Remains of Unregeneracy even in a regenerate Man, viz. the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, which always war against the Spirit, and every now and then draw the Man into Sin. But having elsewhere * refuted this Argument, we shall not insist upon it here.

Again they say, that no Man does keep the Commandments of God, from whence they infer that they cannot be kept by Men; since if they could, it is hardly credible, that not one Man could be found who had not done it. *Ans.* It is one thing not to be free from Sin, and another frequently and daily to fall into Sin after Repentance. They indeed who have indulged themselves in Sin before Repentance, are truly said not to be free from Sin; but daily to commit enormous Crimes after Repentance, is contrary to Regeneration. Besides, we do not say that a Man can live blameless without falling into any Sin, since our human Infirmary is such as not to allow of such a sinless Perfection; but this we do assert, that we ought to proceed in a Christian Course, to amend our Failings, to watch against Temptations, till at last we arrive to perfection, and by the Grace of God attain Everlasting Life.

The last Objection we shall mention, is, That God requires us to love him with all our Hearts and with all our Strength: But this, say they, we cannot do. *Ans.* For as much as God requires that we should love him, not above, but with all our Strength, it is evident that nothing exceeding our Abilities is required at our hands. That this may appear the more distinctly, 'tis to be noted, *That the Love of God consists in obeying his Commands*. Therefore if a hearty Obedience be paid to the Divine Commands, God also is loved with all the Heart and with all the Strength. The Sincerity and Integrity of Love then is here commanded, and that Love is sincere which proceeds from a Heart unfeigned, and is not divided or interrupted by any intervening Sins. But this is not out of a Man's power to perform.

* B. 5. Ch. 7. §. 2.

1 John 5. 3.

S E C T. III.

Of Perseverance.

A third Qualification of our Duty is Perseverance, ^{3. Perse-} which requires that a Man should hold out in the dis- ^{verance ne-} charge of his Duty to his Life's end. The necessity ^{cessary;} of this appears, (1.) Because Salvation is promis'd to none but the persevering Soul'. (2.) God threatens destruction to those that shall revolt and relapse into their old Profaneness of Life': Nay farther, that tho' they had been righteous before, yet he would have no regard to their former Righteousness'. And no wonder; for if the Man himself be forgetful of his own Righteousness and turn aside to Wickedness, how can he expect that God should be mindful thereof? Therefore as by Repentance all our former Sins are blotted out of the Book of God's Remembrance, so by our Relapse all our former Righteousnesses shall be remembered no more. Hence it is that the Scripture all along exhorts us to Constancy, and admonishes us to beware of falling'.

Nor is this Perseverance less possible to a regenerate and believing Man through the Grace of God, as will ^{And possi-} appear by the following Arguments. For first it is ^{ble.} necessary, and God who requires it, will likewise bestow Strength sufficient for the performance thereof: since if a Man can be regenerated by the Divine Grace, he may also persevere by the same Grace. The reason of this is plain, (1.) Because in Regeneration a Man's Warfare is more difficult, having a long and obstinate Custom of sinning to subdue; whilst in a persevering State he meets with less opposition, the Habit of Sin being broken. If then the Grace of God was sufficient to get the Mastery over the greater, it will be much more so in surmounting the lesser Dif-

¹ Mat. 24. 13. Rom. 2. 7, 8. Heb. 3. 14. & 6. 11, 12.
² Rev. 2. 10, 26. ³ Heb. 10. 38. & 4. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12.
⁴ Rom. 11. 20, 21, 22. ⁵ Ezek. 18. 24. & 33. 13. ⁶ 1 Cor.
 6. 13. & 15. 58. ⁷ Heb. 3. 12, 13. & 10. 35, 36.

ficulty. (2.) Because God usually bestows his Grace in greater abundance on those who make a right use of it, especially if they pray for the Assistance of his Holy Spirit. Thus our Saviour assures us¹, *That to him who hath, i. e. who makes a right use of what he hath, more shall be given*: and the Apostle says, *I can do all things thro Christ who strengtheneth me*². But secondly, to evince the possibility of Perseverance, let it be consider'd, That there are none of our spiritual Enemies, neither the World, the Flesh, nor the Devil, but what a Believer who is regenerated, may by the Power of Faith and the Aid of the Divine Spirit easily overcome, and be able to resist all their Assaults. For they can prevail nothing upon Man but by way of Temptation; which Seducement is not of that force, but what may be conquer'd by the Energy of Faith and the Assistance of God's Grace. This is plain from what the Scripture teaches³, *viz. that tho the World, the Flesh, and the Devil may seduce, yet by the Helps aforesaid we may resist and overcome their Sollicitations.*

*Apostacy
contrary to
it; into
which a
Believer
may fall.*

Contrary to Perseverance is Apostacy, by which one who is a Believer and Regenerate departs from the Faith, renounces his good, and relapses into his former bad Course of Life. This is of two sorts, either *Partial*, by which a Man falls into some Sins; but yet so as not to abandon all Holiness, or the Love of Vertue: Or *Total*, by which laying aside a good Conscience he relapses into a profane Course of Life, and makes shipwreck of his Faith. Again, Apostacy is either *Temporary*, when a Man for some time departs from the Faith, and out of which he may recover by the extraordinary Grace of God; or else *Final*, by which he perseveres and dies in an impenitent and infidel State. That a Believer may fall even into presumptuous Sins, there is no Man can question, since every day's Experience attests the Truth of it. But then the Question is, Whether he can wholly relapse, and persevere therein to his Life's End; so that he who

¹ Mat. 25. 29. Luke 11. 13. John 14. 23. ² Phil. 4. 13.
³ See to this purpose 1 Pet. 5. 8. Jam. 4. 7. Eph. 6. 15. 1 Joh.
4. 4. & 5. 4. Gal. 5. 24, &c.

before was Partaker of the Divine Grace by Faith, should again totally and finally fall into Infidelity? As for our parts, we maintain that a Believer who is regenerated, tho he be supported by the Grace and Assistance of God, yet may revolt from his Faith and Piety; either downright wilfully, when a Man will not persevere, but returns again to his old Course, and enslaves himself wholly to his Lusts; or else indirectly, by not being so diligent as he ought in taking care of persevering. For the supporting of this our Opinion, and clearing up of other matters, we shall in the remaining Sections of this Chapter evince the Truth of it; First, from plain Testimonies of Holy Writ: Secondly, from several Instances thereof taken out of Scripture: And Thirdly, from the Exhortations, Threatnings, and Promises of God: After which we shall Fourthly, answer the Arguments usually alledged in defence of the absolute Perseverance of the Faithful: And then lastly, we shall consider the famous Question, *viz.* Whether there are any Hopes of Pardon to those who sin after the Grace of God received, and who swerve from the Faith?

S E C T. IV.

That a Believer may apostatize, prov'd from plain Testimonies of Scripture.

The first Text we think fit to produce in confirmation of our Opinion, is Ezek. 18. 24. *But when the Righteous turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity, and doth according to all the Abominations that the wicked Man doth, shall he live? All his Righteousness that he hath done shall not be mention'd: in his Trespas that he hath trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* From these Words, and what follows ver. 26. 'tis evident that a righteous Man may depart from his Righteousness, and that an unrighteous Man may depart from his Unrighteousness by Repentance, and become righteous. Nay farther 'tis from hence evident, that a Man who by his Righteousness is in a State of Life, may by departing

parting from it be subject to Death; and on the contrary, one who by his Unrighteousness is in a State of Death, may by becoming righteous obtain the State of Life.

Objections answered.

To this Text they make several Exceptions; as First, this is only an Hypothetical Enunciation, which affirms nothing positively. *Ans.* 'Tis indeed an Hypothetical Proposition, but such as supposes a possible Condition, and an Event which will certainly attend the Condition. For 'tis a conditional Threatning, and such as is oppos'd to the Exhortation whereby God admonishes the *Israelites* of their Duty: Now this would be ridiculous, if the Condition and the Execution of the Threatning were not possible. God therefore, if he threatned Death to the righteous Man under the impossible Condition of turning from his Righteousness, would really have promis'd him Life; which is absurd to imagine.

Secondly they object, that the Prophet does not here speak of the truly Righteous and such as believe in Christ; but only of those who have the outward shew of Righteousness only. *Ans.* This is a very trifling Evasion; because (1.) It is said of this righteous Man, that his Righteousness shall be upon him; which could never be said of a Hypocrite that only pretended to be righteous. (2.) This righteous Man is put in opposition to an unrighteous Person, whereas the Hypocrite cannot be so, himself being a wicked Man. (3.) The righteous Man is here said to forsake his Righteousness, and to commit Iniquity; which cannot be true of the Hypocrite, who only forsakes a pretended Righteousness.

2. From
Mat. 13.
20, 21.

Another Text to evince that a Believer may apostatize from the Faith, is Mat. 13. 20, 21. *But he that received the Seed into stony Places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it: Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when Tribulation or Persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended.* By these Words we are plainly taught, that the Faithful not only may, but also that some of them do actually depart from their Faith.

To this they object, First, that our Saviour does not *here speak of those who truly believe, but of such Hypocrites, who do not indeed pretend to a Faith, which they know themselves to be destitute of; but who pretend to what they neither are nor have, tho they think they are and have it; viz. such who have only a temporary, but not a true Faith.* *Ans.* (1.) This which is here called a Temporary Faith is not a new Species of Faith, nor distinguish'd essentially from that which is permanent. No mention is made in Scripture of a temporary Faith, but we only read of Men who believe for a time. (2.) Perseverance is not of the Essence of Faith, but its Consequent: Faith being true Faith, tho a Man does not persevere in it; just as Corn that rises up in stony Ground is true Corn, tho it may be wither'd by the Heat of the Sun. For if this were not so, no Man could be said to be a Believer before his Death.

However you will say, that those who received Seed in the stony Ground, are distinguish'd from those who received Seed into the good Ground. But to this we briefly answer, that this Distinction arises not upon the account of Faith, but upon the account of the Reward promis'd to those only who persevere.

A third Text we shall produce, is *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6, 7, 3.* *From* 8. where the Apostle tells us, That it is impossible for *Heb. 6. 4.* those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the *5, &c. and* Heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy *10. 26, &c.* Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come; if they shall fall away, to renew them again to Repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, &c. Parallel to this is another Passage in the same Epistle, *Ch. 10. v. 26, &c.* In both these places the Faithful are admonish'd to beware of relapsing into their former Wickedness, and that upon this account, that if they should relapse it was impossible for them to be renewed by Repentance: Which would have been needless, if a Believer and a regenerate Person could not fall away. As to what they usually object, that in these Places the Apostle does not treat of the truly Faithful and Pious, but of those who have in some degree Dispositions tending to

a saving Faith and Piety ; the contrary appears from the Circumstances and Descriptions contain'd in those Texts. For the Persons here spoken of are said to be inslghtened, to be sanctified with the Blood of the Covenant, to have tasted of the Heavenly Gift of the good Word of God, and of the Powers of the World to come, and to have been Partakers of the Holy Ghost ; none of which Characters belong to any but those that truly believe. Since then this is plain, it from hence follows, that such may apostatize from the Faith, and fall into the same State from whence they were converted, and consequently be subject to everlasting Damnation. For the Apostle does not here speak of small Sins which they might commit, but of those by which they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and upon the account of which they are compar'd to the Earth which bringeth forth Briars and Thorns, which is nigh unto cursing, and whose end is to be burnt.

4. From
2 Pet. 2.
18, 19,
&c.

The fourth Place we shall urge, is 2 Pet. 2. 18, 19, 20, &c. *For when they speak great swelling Words of Vanity, they allure through the Lusts of the Flesh, through much Wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in Error: While they promise them Liberty, they themselves are the Servants of Corruption: For of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein and overcome, the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them. But it has happened unto them according to the true Proverb, The Dog is turned to his own Vomit again, and the Sow that was wash'd to her wallowing in the Mire.* There is not much need from these Words to form an Argument in defence of our Opinion, since the Apostle speaks almost the same Sense in express Terms. As to what is objected to this Text, it runs in the same Style with what was urged against the former, viz. That the Apostle here speaks not of the true Believers and Regenerate, but only of those

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those who have no solid Faith. But the Description and Character given of the Persons here spoken of, is enough to confute this Objection ; since they are said (1.) To have clean escaped from those who live in Error ; which cannot be applied to them who have no solid Faith. (2.) They are said to have been entangled again ; whereas this can never be said of those who are always intangled. (3.) They are said not only to have had the Knowledg of our Lord and Saviour, but also to have escaped the Pollutions of the World ; therefore they were not endued with a naked and barren Knowledg of our Lord, but with a practical one which approv'd of what it knew. (4.) What should be the Reason why (if they did revolt) their latter End should be worse than the Beginning ? Since if they never had a sound Faith, their State could not be worse by their Apostacy, than theirs who out of prejudice wholly disbelieved the Gospel.

To conclude this Argument we say, that it is preposterous Divinity which teaches us that they who have once believed, and fall into Adultery, Murder, and other enormous Crimes, are still Believers and the Sons of God, even whilst they commit and persevere in those Sins : and which at the same time will not allow those to be truly Faithful, who have escap'd from them who live in Error ; and who have escap'd the Pollutions of the World through the Knowledg of Jesus Christ, even whilst they are in that State.

SECT. V.

The same evinc'd from several Instances taken out of Holy Scripture.

A second Argument in defence of our Opinion, is founded on the Examples of several holy Men and true Believers, who are recorded in Holy Writ to have fell into heinous Sins, and such as destroyed a good Conscience, nay of some who wholly apostatiz'd from the Faith.

The first Example we shall mention is of *David*, 1. of David, whom no Man can deny to be truly regenerate and

faithful. However we read of his falling into Adultery and Murder, not out of any human Infirmity or Surprize, but deliberately and premeditately, in which Sin he for some time persever'd without any Sign of Repentance.

Objections answered.

To this Example several things are objected; as first, that he is properly said to sin wilfully, who ad-dicts and gives himself wholly up to the Slavery of Sin, so as to have no Love for Piety or Vertue: that this is inconsistent with Faith and true Righteousness, but that *David* did not sin with a perfect Deliberation of the Will, but was carried away with a sudden *Impetus* of Passion, having no time to consider what he did. *Ans.* The contrary to this appears by the whole Story of this matter of Fact: For we are told that *David* upon seeing *Bathsheba*, was inflam'd with an unlawful Lust towards her; and upon enquiring who she was, was inform'd that she was the Wife of *Uriah* the *Hittite*, so that he knew that he could have no knowledg of her without being guilty of Adultery, which notwithstanding he committed. Within a few days after, he was told that she was with Child by him; upon which *David*, to cover his Guilt from the Eye of the World, sent for *Uriah* from the Camp, feasted him at a high rate, and would have had him lain with his Wife, in order to make others believe that she was with Child by her Husband. But this Stratagem failing, *David* to conceal his Sin, added another to it; and order'd his General *Joab* to put *Uriah* in the Front of the Battel, that he might be killed by the *Ammonites*. Now who is there that does not see the Sins of Adultery and Murder committed by *David*, clothed with all the Circumstances of Deliberation and Wilfulness imaginable?

Again 'tis objected, that Believers do not sin out of mere Malice or Hatred of Good; but by a Malice that is mix'd with some kind of Infirmity. *Ans.* Nor do the Unregenerate commonly sin out of mere Malice only; *i. e.* for sinning's sake; since none but the worst of Offenders arrive to such a pitch of Wickedness.

Thirdly 'tis urg'd, that true Believers do not commit Sins with the full bent of their Wills, nor is there in them

them that compleat and perfect Dominion of the Flesh which is in Unbelievers, but only for a time; and that the Sins committed by them are with some Reluctancy of Conscience. *Ans.* (1.) There is no necessity that the Dominion of the Flesh should be absolute and compleat, before a Man can be said to be destitute of saving Faith; 'tis enough that this Dominion be such as to render the Flesh Master over the Spirit. (2.) 'Tis plain that such Sins are committed wilfully, since there cannot be a twofold and contrary Will in one and the same Act, especially when 'tis perform'd. (3.) This Reluctancy of Conscience is to be met with even in Infidels. (4.) So far is this Reluctance from extenuating the Sin, or making it involuntary, that it rather aggravates the Sin, and shews how fully bent the Mind was towards it. (5.) And lastly, if this Reluctance were caus'd by the Holy Ghost, it renders the Sin more heinous, than if it were committed, against the Light of Nature or Reason.

Since then 'tis evident from the Instance of *David*, that the Faithful may wilfully fall into heinous Sins, and may persevere in them for some time without any Repentance; we from thence infer, that they may totally depart from the Faith, and be excluded from everlasting Salvation. (1.) Because such Sins are Works of the Flesh, and they who commit them wilfully, walk after the Flesh; of whom it is said, that they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God¹. (2.) Because he who is joined to a Harlot, is said to take the Members of Christ, and make them Members of an Harlot²: and what is this but to cut one's self off from being a Member of Christ? (3.) If *David* at that time remain'd faithful, then he had no need of Repentance in order to Salvation; but he had need thereof, as the Consequence of the Story evinces. (4.) A true and saving Faith shews it self by its Works, as *St. James* tells us³; but the Faith of *David* when he sinned was not productive of good Works. Having insisted thus largely on the case of *David*, and answered some Objections rais'd against it, we shall be more concise in the other Instances we shall produce.

¹ Gal. 5. 21. ² 1. Cor. 6. 15, 16. ³ Jam. 2. 14, 17, 18.

2. of Solomon.

An Objection answered.

3. of Hymeneus and Alexander.

A second Example therefore of the same kind we have in *Solomon* the Son of *David*, whom no Man will disown to be a Believer and Regenerated; and yet he, not out of any Infirmary, but out of an immoderate Love to his idolatrous Wives and Concubines, laps'd into Idolatry, even after God had appeared to him twice, and endued him with a Spirit of Wisdom surpassing all that went before him.

To this Instance some object, that not all those who in some measure are tainted with Idolatry do wholly depart from the Faith: This they endeavour to confirm by the Example of *Aaron*, who made the golden Calf for the *Israelites*; and of the *Corinthians*, who by eating of things offer'd to Idols made themselves Partakers of the Table of Devils. *Ans.* This Objection is nothing to the purpose. For we do not say that all who are in any measure tainted with Idolatry, *i. e.* who commit any thing bordering upon Idolatry, do by that means immediately swerve from a true saving Faith. We would by no means palliate the Crime of *Aaron*, which is so sharply reprehended by *Moses*; however he is not said to have worshipped the Calf, but to have made it out of fear, and at the pressing Importunity of the *Israelites*. As to the *Corinthians*, they were puffed up with too great a Knowledge, and conceiving that an Idol was nothing, they rashly eat of things offer'd to Idols; being ignorant that what they did was unlawful, or that they were Partakers in the Idolatry. But after the Apostle had inform'd them of their Mistake, we do not find that they persever'd in it. Now what has all this to do with the case of *Solomon*, who committed that Act not out of fear, but an immoderate Fondness for his Wives; and who very well knew that what he did was idolatrous, and forbidden by God?

A third Instance we shall mention is that of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. Holding Faith (says the Apostle to *Timothy*) and a good Conscience, which some having put away, concerning Faith have made shipwreck; of whom is *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, whom I have delivered unto Satan. Parallel to this

1. Exod. 32. 2. 1 Cor. 8. & 10. 3. Exod. 32. 22, 23. Place

Place is 2 Tim. 2. 17, 18. where 'tis said, *And their Word will eat as doth a Gangreen: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the Truth have erred, saying, that the Resurrection is past already, and overthrow the Faith of some.* Here *Hymeneus, Alexander and Philetus*, are said to cast away a good Conscience, to have made shipwreck concerning the Faith, to have erred from the Truth, &c. and consequently wholly apostatized from the Faith.

To this 'tis objected, First, that by the word *Faith* *Objections* in this Place is not understood a saving Faith, but *answered.* only the Doctrine of Faith and the Profession thereof. *Answ.* (1.) It cannot be denied that sometimes Faith signifies the Doctrine and Profession thereof. But we say, that there is no Place in Scripture, where Faith when attributed to Men denotes only a Profession, distinct from true Faith. (2.) Tho in other Places the Word *Faith* might admit of such a sense, yet there are several Reasons which prove that it cannot be so taken in the Text now before us. For the Apostle here speaks of such a Faith as *Timothy* had, of a Faith productive of Charity; and of a Faith, in the retaining whereof the warring a good Warfare consists: all which shew that the Faith here spoken of is a true and genuine Faith, and not a bare Profession of it only.

'Tis objected farther, that the Apostle in the fifth Verse of the same Chapter distinguishes a Faith unfeigned from the Faith he intimates to have been in *Hymeneus* and others. *Answ.* There is no such Construction to be put upon that Verse; wherein the Apostle ascribes the same Faith and good Conscience to *Hymeneus* as he doth to *Timothy*: and from the Example of the former, who had put away a good Conscience, and made shipwreck concerning Faith, he admonishes the former still to hold fast both. Now this Instance would have been of no force, unless *Hymeneus* and *Alexander's* Faith and good Conscience had been the same with *Timothy's*. For if their Faith had not been a true Faith, it would, according to the Opinion of the *Contra-Remonstrants*, have been of such a nature, as it must necessarily have failed. And then what is become of *St. Paul's* Admonition? It would amount

amount to no more than this: "Thou Timothy whose Faith cannot fail, take care to hold Fast and a good Conscience; having regard to the Example of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, who have cast away a Conscience that was but apparently good, and have made shipwreck of a Faith which must necessarily have failed." But what wretched Divinity is this!

4. Of Demas.

A fourth Example we shall mention is that of *Demas*. 2 Tim. 4. 10. *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present World.* That *Demas* was a true Believer cannot be denied; being in the Epistle to *Philemon* reckoned among the Fellow-Labourers of St. *Paul*, whose Names are elsewhere said to be written in the Book of Life. But here he is said to have loved the present World, and for the sake thereof to have left *Paul*. Now the Love of this present World is inconsistent with our Love of God², and with that Love wherewith he loveth us, because he who would be Friend of this World, is at enmity with, that is, hated by God³.

An Objection answered.

But to this Instance they except, that *Demas* did not wholly love the World, but loved it more than he became a Christian, and especially a Preacher of the Gospel; i. e. Being in love with the Enjoyments of this Life, he forsook the Apostle *Paul* for a time, when he ought not to have done so, and went to *Thessalonica*, either to take care of his private Concerns, or else to avoid an imminent Danger. *Ans.* (1.) When *Paul* says that *Demas* had forsaken him, his meaning is not, that *Demas* had for a time left his Company, but that he had quitted his Office as a Fellow-Labourer: For *Crescens* and *Titus* had departed, but because it was in order to execute their Office, the Apostle does not say that he was forsaken by them. (2.) To love this present World, always in Scripture denotes that a Man who is in love with it neglects Celestial Things, and not the avoiding of some imminent Danger, or the taking care for a season of a Man's own private Concerns.

¹ Col. 4. 14. Phil. 4. 3. ² 1 John 2. 15. Mat. 6. 24.

³ Jim. 4. 4.

S E C T. VI.

The same thing evinced from the Exhortations, Threatnings and Promises of God.

Our third Argument on the same side is taken from the many Exhortations of God to Carefulness and Perseverance; from his Threatnings of Eternal Destruction, if we apostatize; and from his Promises of Eternal Life, if we persevere, to be met with in Scripture¹. All which would be insignificant, were it impossible for the Faithful to depart from their Faith and Holiness.

The Exhortations tend to excite in us such a Carefulness, as to walk before God with Fear, and to see that there is in none of us an evil Heart of Unbelief, departing from the Living God: The Threatnings support, that if we do not persevere in a virtuous course we shall be cut off; that if we deny God, he will deny us; and that if we forsake him, he will reject us for ever: The Promises of Salvation upon our Perseverance, to the end, &c. do all tend to lay before us the Danger of missing of our Salvation unless we do persevere, and from the consideration thereof to render us more careful, watchful and fearful in the discharge of our Duty, lest we should be tempted to Revolt, and thereby miss of our Salvation. But on the contrary, where by virtue of the Divine Decree, and Providence founded thereon, the Perseverance of the Faithful is so necessary and certain, that God will either preserve them from falling into heinous Sins, or that they should fall into them, yet they are sure that such Sins with respect to them are only Infirmitie, notwithstanding which God will by the Efficacy of

The Exhortations, Threatnings and Promises of God prove that a Believer may apostatize.

¹ The Exhortations to this purpose may be met with, 1 Cor. 16. 13. 2 Cor. 6. 1. Heb. 3. 12, 13. & 4. 1. & 10. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 17. 2 Pet. 3. 17. — The Threatnings are recorded, Rom. 11. 20, 21, 22. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Rev. 2. 4, 5. — The Promises are, Mat. 24. 13. Rom. 2. 7. Rev. 2. 10 — 25. & 3. 21.

his omnipotent Grace work in them Repentance and Perseverance, and consequently will infallibly bring them to Heaven : Where, I say, Men are sure of this, there is no danger of their entirely swerving from the Faith, or of falling short of everlasting Salvation ; and they need not be careful or fearful in the matter. But since the Exhortations, Threatnings and Promises cannot be said to have been made by God for any other end, but to excite in the Faithful a Godly Sollicitude, it must be owned, that if the Faithful cannot apostatize, they all signify just nothing.

*Objections
answered.*

But here in the first place they object, that we falsely charge them with maintaining, " That all true Believers are by an undoubted Faith assured of their Perseverance, and that this Persuasion runs so high, as that it is impossible for them to fall away even by the most enormous Crimes." *Ans.* Let any one judg, by what they publicly teach, whether we lay any thing falsely to their Charge. They maintain, that true Believers cannot revolt : That every Believer is certain of his Faith, and consequently assured of his Perseverance and Salvation ; with the like. For if a Believer is assured, that one who believes cannot revolt, and that he is one of the Number ; it must needs follow, that he himself is certain of his own Perseverance. But whereas it may happen that the Faithful may sometimes fall into various and heinous Sins (as we proved in the Instance of *David*) and they do not upon that account fall from the Grace of God, but are preserved by him in the Faith ; it is from thence evident, that Believers are persuaded, that they should sin very grievously, yet they cannot wholly by those Sins depart from the Faith. This their Opinion does not indeed consist only in this, but it lies in one of these two Points, either that God will preserve them free from those enormous Crimes ; or that if he does not, those Crimes will be no occasion of their revolting entirely from the Faith. And this we are sure, they cannot with any Confidence deny.

*Exhortations
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Perseverance.*

Secondly, They say, That the Means are not repugnant, but subordinate to the End, and that they are not enervated but confirmed by the certainty of attaining the End by them. *Ans.* The Exhortations,

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Chap. 25. *Body of Divinity.*

ns, Threatnings and Promises, cannot be the Means of effecting such a certain and necessary Perseverance; (1.) Because the Means should not contain any thing in them repugnant to the End, which they are intended to effect. But Exhortations (for of these we shall treat first, and prove the same thing of the rest afterwards) contain in them something contrary to the Promise of a certain and necessary Perseverance. For in their own nature they tend to shew the Danger, and by that means to beget a Fearfulness of it: Whereas such a Promise of Perseverance takes away all Danger, and consequently all Fear of it. (2.) If those Exhortations were means of Perseverance, then they either have a necessary Efficacy or Connexion in order to Perseverance, or they have not. If the latter be said, then they are Means by Name only. If the former, then a Believer as such, cannot be certain of his Perseverance, unless he obey the Exhortations, since it depends upon a mutable Qualification: or else it must be said that a Believer will persevere in Faith, whether he obey the Exhortations or not, and then they are no Means.

The same thing is true with respect to the Denun-^{Nor}ciations of Eternal Death; since these are insignificant, ^{Threat-}if Believers cannot revolt. For that thing is insignificant, which is incapable of effecting that which by its nature it is designed to effect: Now the Threatnings of Eternal Death are in themselves designed to beget a Fear thereof; but where there is such a Promise of Perseverance, there can be no Fear of Eternal Death, and consequently to threaten it signifies nothing. Nor is it to any purpose to say, that there is in the Faithful a Dread and Aversion to Eternal Death, to which their Demerits make them liable, even tho they be assured of their own Perseverance; since we do not ask whether they are afraid of Eternal Death, which surely no Man who looks upon it as the greatest Evil can't but dread, but whether they are or can be afraid, that God will ever permit them to be liable thereto? Nor do we enquire, to what their Deserts expose them, but whether God will regard their Demerits, and not rather pardon all those Sins into which by his Permission they have fallen, that

that so they may be necessarily saved? For since they maintain this, they can be under no fear of Eternal Damnation.

Nor Promises.

Lastly, the Promises of God evince the same thing. For if Salvation be irrevocably allotted to the Faithful, before they persevere, or are considered as Perseverers in the Faith; and if by virtue of that Decree Perseverance be promised to them: Then they are assured of the promised Blessing as if it were their own already, as also of their future Perseverance; and consequently there is no occasion to excite them to Obedience by Arguments taken from the Promise of the Blessing; nor indeed can they be moved thereby since they are already entituled to what they might obtain by Perseverance, and need not be allured by the Promise of a Reward. Upon the whole matter we say, that the Doctrine of a certain and necessary Perseverance is very destructive of that sollicitous Care of resisting the Devil, recommended to the Faithful so frequently in Scripture¹: since they are assured that all his Allurements will either prove ineffectual, or that if they are seduced, God will not suffer them finally to perish upon that account.

S E C T. VII.

An Answer to some Arguments usually alledged in defence of the absolute Perseverance of the Faithful.

The next thing we are to do is briefly to consider the principal Arguments urged on the other side.

A general Reply to the first Argument.

In the first place then they muster up a great many Texts of Scripture, wherein God promises that he will make an Everlasting Covenant with Believers² that the Mercy and Loving Kindness of the Lord shall endure for ever³, with the like; and that the

¹ Eph. 6. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 8. and elsewhere. ² Jer. 32. 38. 40. ³ Psal. 125. 1. Isa. 54. 10. & 59. 21. Hos. 2. 19. John 4. 14. & 5. 24. & 6. 35, 37, &c. & 10. 27, 29.

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of Hell shall not prevail against the Church.

In all these Places let this General Answer suffice, viz. that in them there is no Promise made of the Faithful's persevering always in Faith and Holiness: but only that so long as they persevere in their Duty and Obedience, so long God will keep his Covenant with them; and farther, that he will never deprive them of those Benefits promised to them in his Covenant.

In the second Place they urge the Words of our Saviour, Mat. 24. 24. *There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect*; from whence they infer that it is possible for the Elect to be deceived. *Ans.* There is nothing in this Text on which such an Inference can be founded. It cannot be fairly deduced from the Word *Elect*, since, as we have already proved, and shall hereafter have farther occasion to prove, by them that are not meant such as are absolutely elected, but only the Faithful, in whom the Election or Vocation of God is attain'd its End. Nor can it be deduced from the Phrase, *if it were possible*; since that does not always imply an absolute Impossibility, but very frequently the great difficulty of a thing. Besides, this Phrase may, and in this place does signify, if it were possible, viz. for the Seducers, i. e. they will use all their artifices and Endeavours, and leave nothing unattempted, whereby to seduce, if they can, the very Elect. This Phrase is not only taken thus in common Discourse, but the very Circumstances of the Text tell us, that so it ought to be understood: especially if we compare the Words of St. Matthew with those of St. Mark. St. Matthew says, *That false Christs shall shew Signs and Wonders*, ὅτι πλανήσονται, εἰ δυνατόν, τὸς ἐκλεκτοῖς. In St. Mark the Words run thus, ὅτι τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν, εἰ δυνατόν, καὶ τὸς ἐκλεκτοῖς; where the Active Voice πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν does rather denote the Intention of the Seducers, than the Event. And from hence we may fairly infer, that the Verb πλανᾶται in St. Matthew, is not of Passive but Active Signification; and consequently denotes the same

The second
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answered,
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thing with the Words of St. Mark. Again, did this Phrase import an absolute Impossibility, the Necessity and Efficacy of our Saviour's Prediction and Admonition will be of no force: since he bids the Elect to be ware of being deceived, whom he knew (according to this Notion) to be out of a possibility of being deceived. Lastly, our Saviour does more than once in the same Chapter assert the quite contrary: Thus ver. 4, 5. *Take heed that no Man deceive you; for many shall come in my Name, saying, I am the Christ, and shall deceive many.* And again, ver. 12. *Because Iniquity shall abound, the Love of many shall wax cold.*

The third
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answer'd,
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plained.

Thirdly they argue, That those who depart from the Faith which they for some time professed, were never true Believers; from whence they infer, that the true Believers do never depart from the Faith. The Antecedent of this Argument they endeavour to prove from 1 Joh. 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* Answ. Nothing can be concluded from this Place, unless they would take it for granted, that the Phrase *Were of us*, signifies a true Believer; and the other, *Were not of us*, denotes that he was never a Believer; and that the *Going out from us*, signifies a Departure from the Congregation of the Apostles, and the *remaining with us*, a Continuance in the Faith as the Apostles did. But these are not only uncertain Conjectures, but such as may be refuted by the following Arguments. (1.) For it must then be said, either that the Apostle by a special Revelation understood that they who departed were never true Believers, which is what none can prove, nor does it look probable: or else that he thus concluded from their outward Departure; and then it will follow, that they who are once true Christians, do still remain such in Profession, and cannot separate themselves, no not for a season, from the Congregation of the Faithful to which they belong; which is notoriously false by the *Contrary Remonstrants* own Confession. (2.) It is not here said that they were never Believers, or that if they had been so for some time, they would never depart from

from them; but only that they who went out and convers'd a while with the Apostles, did not do it sincerely, because if they had been sincere, they would not have had any just Cause of departing from them: But God was pleas'd by this their Separation to detect their Hypocrisy and Wickedness; as is evident from the last Words, viz. *That they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* All those earnest Admonitions us'd by St. John to exhort the Faithful to beware of Seducers, would have been to no purpose, if at the same time he had taught them, that the truly Faithful could never apostatize from the Faith, and that as many as did so, were never genuine Believers.

The last Argument which they make use of, is taken from some Places of Scripture; wherein they suppose we are taught, that the true Believers are so far freed from the Yoke of Sin, that they cannot commit it any more, and that their spiritual Enemies are so far subdued, that there is no farther fear of being conquer'd by them again. The first Text produc'd to this purpose is that of *Rom. 8. 35, &c.* where St. Paul says, *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, &c. Nay in all these things we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us. For I am perswaded, that neither Death nor Life, &c. nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Answ. The Design of this whole Passage is only to inform us, that no Adversities, even Death it self, shall be any hindrance to a Believer's Salvation. For the Apostle here speaking of the Love of God, does not mean that by which we love him, but that whereby he loves us, from which no Afflictions how grievous soever can separate us, so long as we keep faithful to him.

*The fourth
Objection
answer'd,
and Rom.
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explain'd.*

Another Text to the same purpose is *1 Joh. 3. 9. 1 Joh. 3. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* Answ. To commit Sin does in this place properly denote a being addicted to it, or being under the Habit of it; in which sense it is generally taken by the Apostle in this Epistle. So when St. John says that a regenerate Person doth not and cannot commit Sin; his meaning is not, that it is impossible for

such an one to abandon a Custom of acting righteously, and by degrees to fall into an habitual Course of sinning, since the contrary to this is evinc'd by daily Experience: But the sense is, that a custom of sinning is inconsistent with a State of Regeneration, and consequently that one who is born of God has so strong an Aversion to Sin, that he cannot without some difficulty be allur'd to relapse into a wicked Course of Life.

S E C T. VIII.

Whether they who sin after Grace received, and who apostatize from the Faith, can have any Hopes of Pardon left?

The Question stated.

We cannot better conclude this large Treatise of the Christian Vertues, than by taking into Consideration this noted Question; viz. Whether any one who falls into grievous Sins, and relapses into his former Wickedness of Life after Grace received, can repent of that Sin, and by his Repentance be restored to the Favour of God? This was a Point hotly managed of old in the Christian Church by Novatian a Presbyter of Rome, who maintain'd, that the Lapsed were not only to be denied Communion, but also were not to be admitted to Repentance.

Hopes of Remission left to those who sin after Grace received.

Certain it is that the Promise of Remission, made to the Penitent in the New Covenant, properly regards Sins committed before Faith and Repentance: However there are several Passages in Scripture, which prove that all Hopes of Remission are not cut off even from those who relapse into some Sins after Faith and Repentance, provided they seriously repent thereof. For (1.) Repentance is recommended to such, as for instance to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus; I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love; remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent: Which would have been needless if they could neither repent, nor by their Repentance recover the Favour of God. (2.) We infer as much

from the nature of the Covenant of Grace ; which depends both on the Mercy of God, according to which he will deal with Men suitably to the Frailty of their Natures ; and on the Blood of a merciful Mediator, who was tempted in all things as we are, that he might have compassion on our Infirmities¹. (3.) There are several Promises of Remission in Scripture made to those who sinned contrary to the Will of God already revealed to them, which may be met with in several Places of the Prophets²: from whence we may safely conclude, that God will not be less indulgent and merciful to the Faithful under the New Covenant, if they should fall into Sins and repent of them. (4.) We have Instances of those who sinned after Grace received, and yet by a serious Repentance obtain'd Pardon from God ; such as *David*, *Peter*, the incestuous Person delivered up by *St. Paul* to be buffeted by Satan, and the seven Churches of *Asia*, whom God exhorted to Repentance, even after he had charg'd them with several Crimes³. (5.) And lastly, unless this be granted, several Absurdities will follow: for either Despair will arise in the Minds of pious Persons when they shall perceive that they are not free from all Sin, and consequently think themselves not to be in a State of Salvation ; or Presumption in the Minds of others. For since a Man cannot easily be persuaded, that he is wholly bereft of the Hopes of Salvation, before he supposes himself to be in such a State, he will be apt to ascribe to himself perfect Holiness, that he may sooth and flatter himself with the Hopes of eternal Life : and whilst he does thus, he will neither own his Sins, nor be induc'd to repent of them, and by this means precludes himself from obtaining Remission of Sins.

As to Apostates who have wholly departed from the Faith, and relapsed into their former Infidelity, their Case we own is somewhat different: However from the foremention'd Arguments it may be infer'd, that even such Persons, if they seriously repent of their Sins, are not precluded from all Hopes of Pardon. For it

¹ Heb. 2. 17, 18. ² Is. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18. Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9. Ezek. 18. & 33. ³ Rev. 2. & 3.

is not credible that God, whilst he preserves Men in Life, Health, and the use of their Reason, should so far shut the Door of his Grace in this Life, as to take away from them all power of repenting. We know there are two Places commonly urg'd to prove the Impossibility of such Mens Repentance, viz. *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* and *Ch. 10. 26, 27, &c.* But how harsh soever these Texts may sound at first; yet that 'tis not absolutely impossible for such Men to be renewed again by Repentance, but only very difficult and next to impossible, is plain to any, who will consider the boundless Mercy, Long-suffering, and Forbearance of God, exercis'd towards the most obstinate Sinners in this Life.

The several degrees of Apostacy and Apostates, and the Difficulty of their Repentance shewn.

But for a more distinct View of the Difficulty of such Persons Repentance, we must consider the various Degrees of Apostacy, according to the several Acts which constitute and compleat a saving Faith. For (1.) the Habit of Holiness may be lost, and yet an Assent to the Truth may remain. (2.) This very Assent may be gone, and yet a Knowledge of the Truth left. (3.) And lastly, this very Knowledge may be lost, and the Man given up to his sensual Lusts like the Beasts that perish. According to these different degrees of Apostacy, we maintain that the Difficulty of Repentance is either greater or less.

As to the first of these, there still remains in them a certain Principle of Repentance, whereby they may, tho' very difficultly, be excited thereto. The reason of the Difficulty is, because they have rendred the Grace of God, by which they were converted, ineffectual and of no avail to themselves; so that they stand in need of a fresh and more effectual Grace, which God has not expressly promis'd; but may according to the nature of the New Covenant be obtain'd, if the Sinner ask it of God by ardent and fervent Prayer.

The second sort of Apostates, who have together with the Habit of Holiness lost their Assent to the Truth, are more hardly brought to Repentance, being deprived of that Principle, which should incline them to believe the Precepts, Promises and Threatnings of God, and by the power thereof induce them to repent. However; since the Knowledge of the Truth still re-

main

mains in them, we question not but that upon their earnest Prayer to God, he will grant them new Strength, by which they may be excited again to acknowledge the Truth, and so by degrees be brought over to a Newness of Life.

But as for the last, in whom the Knowledge of the Truth is wholly extinguish'd, they are hardly to be esteem'd as Men, but are such whom God has given over to a reprobate sense, who have lost the use of their Reason, and make no difference betwixt Good and Evil. If there be any who are fallen into such a wretched State (tho we hope there are but few such) we dare not say that they can be renewed again by Repentance, since there is no Principle left in them by which they may be excited thereto. As for the two former, they may be reclaimed if they observe what is prescribed to the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus*, viz. remember from whence they are fallen, repent of their past Sins, and do their former Works.

BOOK VI.

Of the PROMISES and THREATNINGS of the NEW COVENANT.

CHAP. I.

Of the Divine Promises and Threatnings in general.

*Promises
and Threat-
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IN the foregoing Book we treated very largely of the first part of the Divine Covenant, viz. the Duty which God requires on Man's side; we shall in this explain the other part, viz. the Promises and Threatnings upon which God has established this Covenant. For tho God, as the absolute and supreme Lord of all, could by right of Creation have required any sort of Obedience at our hands without the Promise of any Reward; and we as his Workmanship were obliged to any manner of Service he demanded, for neglecting of which we might have been justly punished: Yet has it pleased this benign and most tender Lover of the Welfare of Mankind, to establish his Laws on the best of Promises, and the most dreadful Threatnings, thereby to engage us the more closely to the Practice of Piety. And truly without these there could scarce be expected any Obedience to be paid to the Divine Laws, especially when they prescribe any thing that is ungrateful

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grateful to Flesh and Blood : And hence it has been truly observed, that Promises and Threatnings are the very Sinews of the Law.

But here it may be asked, whether it becomes a Christian, whom God has adopted for his Son, to be excited to obey him in hopes of a Reward. Some indeed tell us that it is Mercenary, to do one's Duty in prospect of a Reward; and that 'tis the Duty of Sons to do it purely out of love to their Father. But this Notion we have elsewhere¹ refuted, and shall by the following Arguments farther refute. (1.) God by the Promise of a Reward and the Greatness thereof exhorts and excites us to Obedience²: Now 'tis not unlawful to make use of the same means to promote, which God does in exciting us to our Duty. (2.) The Scripture expressly commands, that we should have regard to the Recompence of Eternal Life, and seek after it by obeying God³; and hence Eternal Life is called a *Reward*⁴, nay expressly *μεταδοσια*, a *Recompence of the Reward*⁵. (3.) Faith in Holy Writ is required not accessarily but principally, and as the Foundation of our whole Obedience: But the whole Essence of Faith consists in having an eye to the Reward; according to that of the Apostle⁶, *He that cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a REWARDER of those who diligently seek him*. It is not therefore only lawful to have regard to the Reward, but even there are some Duties which cannot be performed without it; such as bearing the Cross and suffering Death for the sake of Christ. (4.) The best and most pious Persons have been excited by this Consideration to obey God, and their Obedience as grounded on the Belief of a Reward is proposed to our Imitation, as appears by the whole 11th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, in the Instances of *Abraham* and the Patriarchs, and particularly of *Moses*, who is expressly said to have had respect to the Recom-

Lawful to obey God, in hopes of a Reward.

¹ Book V. Ch. 9. §. 7. ² Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. Rom. 8. 13. Gal. 6. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 1 John 2. 25. ³ Mat. 6. 20, 33. Luke 12. 33. Col. 3. 1, 2. 1 Tim. 6. 12. ⁴ Mat. 5. 12. Luke 6. 23. Col. 3. 24. Rev. 11. 18. & 22. 12. ⁵ Heb. 10. 35. & 11. 26. ⁶ Heb. 11. 6.

pence of the Reward. Nay, the Apostle declares the same thing of himself ' ; and 'tis said of our Saviour, *That for the Joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, despised the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of God* '. Now to say, without making any distinction, that to obey God in hopes of a Reward is mercenary, is to charge those most holy Persons, that they did not obey God sincerely, but as Mercenaries, which cannot be said without the highest Blasphemy.

*Objections
answered.*

However many things are commonly urged against this Doctrine ; tho (which is a wonder) no Text is produced which either disapproves of such an Obedience, or condemns it as mercenary. This one would think was necessary in a matter of so great Concernment, that the Conduct of a Man's whole Life depends upon it. All that they pretend to is only some trifling Arguments and Consequences seemingly deduced from Holy Writ. We shall only mention at present some of their principal Objections, to which we shall return a direct but short Answer.

In the first place they object, that tho God had promised no Reward to us, yet we who own him and his Authority were obliged to obey him. *Ans.* 'Tis granted ; but it does not from thence follow, that it is unlawful to have an eye to the obtaining a Reward by our Obedience to God.

Again they tell us, that a sincere Obedience ought to proceed from the Love of God alone, who is supremely Good and Amiable. *Ans.* This we likewise confess : but 'tis because in the Fruition of this Being we shall attain to the highest Happiness ; and not only as he is looked upon as the most amiable of Beings, without any regard had to our Enjoyment of him.

Thirdly, 'tis objected, That he who loves Eternal Life more than God, is not worthy of God, because he loves something above God. *Ans.* (1.) That Man who loves Eternal Life, which none but God does or can bestow, must needs love God above all things.

1. 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. & Ch. 5. 8, 9, 10, 11. Phil. 3. 10, 11, 12, 14. 2. Heb. 12. 2.

(2.) The

(2.) The Happiness of Everlasting Life consists in the Enjoyment of God; therefore he who loves that, loves nothing distinct from God, but God himself.

Fourthly, 'tis said, that they who obey in hopes of a Reward, do it out of Self-Interest, and obey God only because he by his Promises bids most; which if he did not, the Love of Vertue would be no Inducement to their Obedience. *Ans.* (1.) God himself requires that we should obey him by Faith; which Faith, as we have already observed, has an eye to promised Blessings. (2.) A distinction ought to be made between Temporal Blessings relating to this Life, and Spiritual relating to the next. They who only regard the former, do not seem to obey out of a Love to God and Vertue, so much as they do out of a Love of some Temporal Advantage: whereas those who obey out of a Love to Eternal Life (which consists in the Enjoyment of God) obey out of a principle of Love to God as the supreme Good, and of Vertue which reconciles us to him. (3.) A distinction ought to be made between those Vertues, which the very Light of Nature directs us to perform, such as Probity, Justice, Compassion, Gratitude, &c. which ought and may be performed for the sake of Vertue alone: and between those which Reason cannot dictate, as being repugnant to it self, and which God requires as extraordinary Instances of our Obedience; such as Self-denial, bearing the Cross, loving our Enemies, &c. which cannot be performed without the prospect of a greater Blessing than any we part with.

Lastly they object, That Love only requires Affection towards the Person, without any regard had to the Good which we may expect from the Fruition of the Object. *Ans.* A distinction ought to be made between a Love of Benevolence, which only regards the Welfare of another, without any Interest of our own; and the Love of Complacency, or Friendship, which intends an Union with the Person whom we thus love. Again we ought to distinguish between a Love which terminates in the Person we love, and that which does not rest there, but is carried out farther. These things being premised, we say, that the Love, not of Benevolence, but of Complacency, which

which terminates in the Person beloved, has always regard to our Good, which we may reap from the Enjoyment of the Person so loved.

Not servile to obey God out of fear of Eternal Punishment.

There is another Question still behind, which deserves a particular Consideration, *viz.* Whether it be servile to obey God out of fear of that Eternal Punishment which he threatens? *Ans.* 'Tis I confess more generous to be induc'd to Obedience by the hopes of a future Reward; and some have by a continued Habit of Vertue arriv'd so far, as to obey God only out of love to Eternal Life. However, at the beginning of a Man's Conversion, when the Lusts of the Flesh are to be subdued with some Violence, if he has an eye to the Divine Threatnings, and for fear of them is inclined to obey God, his Obedience cannot be called servile, nor does he act unbecoming a Christian. But having (*Book V. Ch. 9. S. 5.*) proved the Truth of this Doctrine, in treating of the Fear we owe to God, we shall not insist upon it, but proceed to answer some of the principal Objections that are commonly rais'd against it.

Objections answered.

The first Objection is, that true Faith casteth out Fear. *Ans.* True Faith does not expel the Fear of Divine Threatnings, since it has particular regard to them; but only of Human, which threaten Punishment to those who do obey God. Nay the Fear of the Divine Threats is a Motive of our obeying God, in opposition to those of Men, who only can kill the Body; and as such is recommended to us by our Saviour¹.

Again they urge that, *Rom. 8. 15.* we are said *not to have received the Spirit of Bondage again unto fear, but to have received the Spirit of Adoption, &c.* *Ans.* In this place the Apostle treats of that anxious Obedience which prevailed under the Law, which was as a Schoolmaster to the *Israelites* to bring them to Christ. From this servile State the Faithful are freed, as being not subject to the legal Yoke of Ceremonies, nor to the Condemnation of the Law. However, they are not free from the Fear of forfeiting their Right

¹ Mat. 10. 28. Luke 12. 4, 5.

being the Sons of God, if they should apostatize from the Faith.

Lastly, 'tis objected, that St. John says, 1 Epist. 4. *There is no fear in Love, but perfect Love casteth out Fear; because Fear hath Torment: he that feareth is not made perfect in Love.* Answ. By Fear in this place is understood a Fear of Dangers and Miseries, which the Faithful in this Life might meet with from men upon the account of the Love which they bore to God; such a Fear the Love of God wholly excludes: but thereby is not meant a Fear of the Divine Threatnings.

To conclude, It is servile to obey unwillingly out of principle of fear of Eternal Punishment, without any other Motive joined to it. 'Tis servile to perform only an External Obedience to God out of fear of Punishment, and not to serve him with the whole Heart. But to be moved to obey God out of a dread of being separated from him for ever, is a Filial Fear, arising from an intense Love towards God, as looking upon it to be the greatest of Miseries to be deprived of the Vision of our Heavenly Father for ever.

CH A P. II.

Of the Promises and Threatnings of the New Covenant relating to this Animal Life.

SINCE then it appears from what has been said in the foregoing Chapter, that it is not unlawful for a Christian to serve God in hopes of a Reward, or out of fear of Punishment, it is proper for us more particularly to consider the Promises and Threats of God under the New Covenant, that we may see by what Reward God desires to excite us to Obedience, and by what Punishment he would deter us from Sin and Rebellion. The Promises and Threatnings of the Christian Religion, either respect this Animal Life, or the Spiritual One.

The

The Promises relating to this Animal Life, are the least in the Christian Religion.

The Promises relating to this Animal Life are not such special Blessings as were promised in the Old Testament, but only general, and such as are necessary for the support of this Life. Thus 'tis said, *God linefs hath the Promise of the Life that now is, and that which is to come*. Again, *Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. And again, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you*. From this general way of speaking it appears, (1.) That this is the least Promise belonging to the Christian Religion; since Eternal Life is properly promised to the Faithful, and is that which is peculiar to the New Covenant; and since the Cross and Afflictions which are foretold will befall Christians, cannot be consistent with an affluence and quiet possession of this World's Goods. (2.) That it is not absolutely promised to the Godly, but only under this Condition, that it be not prejudicial to the promoting the Glory of God, their own Salvation, and the Edification of others.

Long Life a Blessing even under the New Testament.

But here it may be asked, Whether long Life can be reputed a Blessing under the New Testament. For since we maintain that the Salvation of all Children dying in their Infancy is certain, and that many Adult Persons by a wicked and irreligious Life bring Damnation upon themselves; it seems better that Children should die in their Infancy, than to grow up and become doubtful of their Salvation. Answer. There may such cases happen, as that with respect to the Miseries of this Life it would be better for a Child to die young, than by a longer Life to be involved in those Miseries; as appears from the Instance of *Jeroboam's Child*: But with respect to Eternal Life, tho we do believe the Salvation of Infants to be a thing certain, yet we are of opinion that a longer Life, tho exposed to a Thousand Dangers of sinning and perishing, is a very great and desirable Blessing. For (1.) The Adult Faithful are sure, that the Assistance of God, by which they are capable of obeying the Divine Precepts, and of attaining Salvation, will

never be wanting to them, provided they by earnest prayer desire it of God. (2.) Nor are they less certain, that by this their Obedience they promote the glory of God, and that it is more acceptable to him than the bare Innocence of Infants; from whence they are confirmed in the hopes of Eternal Life, by the seal of the Holy Spirit imprinted on their Hearts; and therefore are filled with unspeakable Joy. (3.) Add to this, that their Obedience, performed by the most difficult Acts of Piety, will be crowned with a greater degree of Glory than the Innocence of Infants: especially since we are uncertain what degree of Glory God will bestow on Infants that die, before they have the use of their Reason.

The Threats relating to this Life, comprehend those various Troubles, Afflictions, Distempers, and even Death it self, which may befall us here below. For there is no question but that by the word Death threatned by God in the New Testament is meant chiefly Death Eternal; yet it denotes also Temporal Death which puts a period to this present Life, as it is the beginning of that Everlasting Death which is the Portion of the Wicked. Nay, sometimes it denotes only Temporal Death inflicted on the Faithful as a Punishment of some Offence into which they have fallen, and which God, tho he will not punish it with Death Eternal, yet is not pleased to let it go unpunished.

But for a more distinct View of these Divine Threatnings and Punishments, 'tis to be noted, that the Judgments of God, especially under the New Covenant, are usually distinguished into Judgments of Visitation and Correction, or of utter Destruction. The former take place in this, the latter in the next Life. The one, the Tokens of Wrath, yet are mixed with some Love, viz. that of Benevolence; in as much as they tend to the Amendment of the Person corrected, that he may by a serious Repentance avoid the former Punishment, and be reconciled to the Favour and Friendship of God; whilst the other proceed from his Wrath only, and bring upon the Man unavoidable Destruction: And hence David prays that God would not correct him in his Anger.

The Divine Judgments are either of Visitation or of Destruction.

¹ Psal. 6. 2.

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Again, the Punishments or Judgments of this Life are such as are inflicted on any private Persons, or such as befall a whole Church or People; and these last again are either of Correction or Destruction. In these very Judgments God manifests a great deal of Tenderness, since he is never hasty in cutting off any People how notoriously wicked soever, and never suffers his whole Displeasure to arise, till after many Corrections have been tried and proved ineffectual to a People that have filled up the Measure of their Iniquity. And here it is to be observed, that in the universal Destruction of a whole Nation, we must not suppose that all who are involved in the same Calamity, are likewise cut off by an angry God. For he sometimes discharges his Wrath upon a whole Body or Society of Men, considered as such, wherein the Righteous are cut off with the Wicked, tho they are exempted from Everlasting Misery. And this cannot be otherwise, since God's dealing with publick Communities in this World is in some measure different from his Transactions with private Persons. For publick Societies or Communities, as such, are accountable to God only in this World; and consequently the Judgments of God with respect to these Publick Bodies must take place here, and not wait for a Retribution in the World to come. Therefore in the destruction of a sinful Nation, no wonder if some few good Men are swept away among the many Wicked. Whereas private Persons, tho they are corrected here, yet will receive their full Retribution of Reward or Punishment in the World to come, when they shall each of them answer for himself and his own Actions, at the Great and August Tribunal of Jesus Christ.

C H A P. III.

Of the Promises and Threatnings of the New Covenant relating to the Spiritual Life; and first, of such as have their Completion in this World.

THE Promises and Threats of the New Covenant which relate to the Spiritual Life, either regard those Divine Acts which have their Completion in this World, or which shall at last be compleated in the World to come. As to the saving Acts whereby God expresses his Goodness to the Faithful in this World, they are Election, Adoption, Justification, Sanctification, and being sealed by the Holy Ghost: The penal Acts which he exercises towards the Infidels and Profane in this Life are three, *viz.* Reprobation, Blinding, and Hardning. Of these salutary and penal Acts of God, we shall treat distinctly in the several Sections of this Chapter.

S E C T. I.

Of the Actual Election and Adoption of the Faithful.

Election is that Act of God by which he in time separates the Believers from the impious part of Mankind, and places them as his distinct Flock from the Number of the Damned, and enrolls them (as it were) among those who shall be saved. We say 'tis an Act of God performed in time, to shew that it was not from all Eternity, as is commonly imagined: We add, by which he separates the Faithful, thereby to shew that Faith is not subsequent of, but precedent to Election; and that it is not the effect of Election, but a Qualification pre-required for it.

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what.*

To

*Election
either to
Grace, or
to Glory.*

To render this the more clear, it must be noted that Election is either to Grace or to Glory; for these are Terms no where to be met with in Holy Writ, yet they have some sort of Foundation therein. Election denotes a Separation of one Thing or Person from another; no matter whether there be any Grounds for such an Election either in the one or the other. In Scripture, Election signifies an actual Allotment to some Privilege which others want; and is either of a whole Nation to some certain Prerogative above the rest, in which sense the *Israelites* are said to be the Chosen People of God¹: or of particular Persons, (1.) To some extraordinary Office, as was the Election of *Saul* and *David* to the Kingdom; of *Aaron* to the Priesthood; and of the Twelve to the Apostleship². (2.) To some Temporal Favour and extraordinary Privileges, in which sense *Jacob* and his Posterity were elected and preferred before *Esaú* and his Family³. (3.) To a Spiritual and Heavenly Grace, in which sense all those who are called by the Gospel to the participation of Eternal Happiness are said to be elected; and that upon these two accounts: First, because they are called out of the common Herd of Mankind, and separated by God to his particular Service: And secondly, upon the account of their former State, whom God permitted to walk in their own Ways, but now doth he call upon all Men every where to repent. But whereas God intends that those whom he calls should attain to some certain End, which they cannot attain without a free Obedience and Faith; therefore they who have obtained that End, are in the most proper sense styled the *Elected*⁴.

*Election to
Glory made
in time,
and subsequent to
Faith.*

They therefore are elected to Glory, whose Election is confirmed by Faith; and this is done in time, and is subsequent to our Faith, nor can any Text be produced to the contrary, wherein it is said to be done from all Eternity. True it is, that *Eph. 1. 4.* we are said, *to be chosen by God before the Foundation of the*

¹ Deut. 7. 6. & 14. 2. & 26. 18. ² Luke 5. 13. John 15. 19. ³ Rom. 9. 11. ⁴ 1. Thess. 1. 4. Rom. 8. 33. Tit. 1. 1, &c.

World; but this, as well as other Places; only treats of the Decree of Election to Grace, and not to Glory, as is manifest from what follows; *That we should be Holy, and without blame before him in Love.* That Election is subsequence to our Faith and Obedience, and consequently that a Believer as such is the Object of Election, appears from all those Places, wherein Faith and Repentance are required as Conditions of Salvation.

To this they usually urge divers Objections, but having answered several of them in another place, we shall only reply to such as remain unaccounted for. First then, they tell us that *Tit. 1. 1.* it is said, *according to the Faith of God's Elect*: from whence they infer, that if the Faith be that of the Elect, then Election precedes Faith. *Ans.* This Inference is very trifling: For (1.) Faith in this place does not denote the very Act of Faith, but by a Metonymy the Doctrine of Faith. (2.) The Elect are not here necessarily understood of those who are chosen to Glory. But (3.) Suppose that we understand them in that sense, yet it can be no more proved from this Expression, *The Faith of the Elect*, that Election precedes Faith; than it can be inferred from these Phrases, *The Faith of the Saints*, *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, that Holiness is prior to Faith. As therefore the Faith of the Saints means the Faith which they professed, or with which they were endued, who became Holy after they believed; so in this place the Faith of the Elect signifies the Faith which they professed, who were elected by God after they had believed in him.

Again they object, that *1 Pet. 1. 2.* they are called *the Elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father, thro Sanctification of the Spirit to Obedience, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ.* *Ans.* (1.) They are not said to be Elect according to the Foreknowledge of the Father, much less unto Obedience;

¹ 2 Tim. 1. 9. Rom. 8. 30. Eph. 2. 5, 6. ² Mark 16. 16. John 3. 16. & 6. 40. & 8. 24. Rom. 10. 9. *In which Places Faith is required.* Mat. 5. 20. & 6. 14. Luke 13. 3, 5. Rom. 8. 13. *wherein Repentance is prescribed.* ³ Rev. 13. 10. Jude ver. 3.

but the Words, according to the Foreknowledge of the Father, ought to be connected with those that follow, *ἐν ἀγαπῇ πνεύματος*, supplying *ἐν*; and then the meaning would be, that they by the good Pleasure of God the Father are by the Holy Ghost separated from a wicked World, in order that they should obey God and so be sprinkled with the Blood of the New Covenant. (2.) But admit of the present Reading, it may be understood of the Elect to Grace, who are entred into a State of Salvation without their own Means, being called thereto only by the Mercy of God, without any regard had to their own Works. For should we understand it of Election to Glory, then it must be said that St. Peter looked upon all those to whom he wrote as Elect, which Supposition is very absurd.

Adoption
considered.

To Election to Glory is immediately annexed the second Favour bestowed by God on the Faithful, viz. Adopting them for his Children. We are said to be the Sons of God in a natural sense upon the account of his creating us, and this is common to all Men, to Infidels as well as Believers: But the Faithful, whom God is pleased in a more especial manner to adopt for his Sons, are so upon these three accounts. (1.) Upon the account of some singular Favour, as suppose of an External Covenant, by which God adopts some Persons for his own People in exclusion of all others; and in this sense the *Israelites* were stiled the peculiar People and Sons of God. (2.) Upon the account of that Regeneration which God works in us by his Word and Spirit, by which we are made like to God, and bear his Image upon us, just as a Son resembles his Father; and in this sense the Faithful and Godly in the New Testament, are all along called the Sons of God. (3.) Upon the account of some excellent Dignity designed us by God, for the sake of our Resemblance to him; by which he adopts us for his Sons, and bestows upon us a Right to the Inheritance of Heaven, to be attained by us in his good time. Adoption taken in this last sense, as entitling us to an Inheritance, is the special Promise of the New Covenant, a Blessing bestowed on the believing Soul, who by a Sanctity of Life resembles God: And hence appears the height of Divine Love, in that God gratuitously adopts the Faithful

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for his Sons, who by none of their Works could merit Heaven.

S E C T. II.

Of Justification.

A Third Spiritual Favour bestowed by God on the faithful in this World is *Justification*. Now in order to treat clearly of this matter it will be requisite, in the first place, to take away all Ambiguity which may happen in this Expression; since the Word *Justification* as well as *Righteousness* admits of several Significations in Scripture, and especially these three. (1.) It signifies the Law of God which teaches us Righteousness¹. (2.) The acquiring of Righteousness, by which he that was unrighteous before, is made truly Righteous². And (3.) In a Judicial Sense it denotes a Declaration of Righteousness, that is, absolving a Man from Guilt, and treating him as one that is Righteous³. These are the proper Significations of the Word; as for the other improper and figurative meanings, we shall not insist upon them at present.

But here the Question is, in which sense this Word is to be taken in the business of Justification? The *Romanists* would have it in the second, but we take it in the third. For the due clearing of this matter 'tis to be noted, that the *Romanists* do not exclude the third sense; for they say, that Absolution from Guilt is a Consequent of Justification, and will be of force in the other World: But that Justification, whereby God is said to justify us in this Life, is an Infusion of Righteousness, by which he makes Men Righteous who were Unrighteous. As for our parts we freely own, that not only Faith, but other Vertues proceeding from Faith, are requisite to Justification; we farther own, that Faith purges our Consciences from Sins, and in this sense we may be said to be justified by Faith.

¹ Psal. 119. ver. 5, 8, 16, 20, &c. ² 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rev. 22. 11. ³ Prov. 17. 15. Isa. 5. 23. Luke 10. 29.

But after all, we look upon the very Act of justifying, as it is the Act of God, to be a judicial Act; and that for these Reasons. (1.) Because Justification is co-incident with the Remission of Sins, which is a judicial Act. (2.) Justification is oppos'd to Condemnation; but to condemn, is not to make, but to declare a Man guilty, and to deal with him as such: and therefore by the Rule of Contraries, to justify is to declare a Person to be righteous, and to treat him as such. (3.) The same thing is confirmed by all those Phrases, wherein Faith is said to be imputed for Righteousness, *i. e.* that a Man is esteemed by God as Righteous upon the account of his Faith.

Justifica-
tion defin'd.



Its two
parts, Re-
mission of
Sins, and
imputing of
Righteous-
ness.

To let this Dispute pass, we say, "That Justification is the Merciful and Gracious Act of God, whereby he fully absolves from all Guilt the truly penitent and believing Soul, through and for the sake of Christ apprehended by a true Faith: or, gratuitously remits Sins upon the account of Faith in Jesus Christ, and graciously imputes that Faith for Righteousness."

From this Definition 'tis plain that Justification consists as it were of two parts, *viz.* Remission of Sins, and Imputation of Righteousness. Remission of Sins is nothing else, but the not inflicting of the Punishment due to them. This is very frequently promis'd in the Acts of the Apostles, and we profess it in our Creed, when we say, *I believe the Remission of Sins*: which Article seems to have been added against the *Novatians*, who maintain'd that there was no Remission for those who fell into any grievous Sin after Baptism. The Imputation of Righteousness is the Gracious Judgment of God, whereby he esteems a Believing and Penitent Sinner, and one who brings forth Fruits worthy of Repentance, as much as if he had been perfectly Righteous, and had always and in all things obeyed his Will and Laws; and consequently will treat him as such, *i. e.* will bestow upon him Eternal Life as the Reward and Crown of Righteousness. But after all, we are not to fancy that the Righteousness imputed to us is Christ's Righteousness, since

the Scripture no where speaks of any such thing : but only that Faith is imputed to us for Righteousness, and this for the sake of Christ.

For the farther illustrating of this Point, we shall enquire into the principal Cause of this Justification, and what means God is pleased to have us make use of that we may partake thereof. The principal Cause of it is the Mercy and Bounty of God : for since we were all Sinners, and guilty of Punishment, if he be extreme to mark what we have done amiss, *no Man living can be justified in his Sight* ^{Its principal Cause, the Mercy of God.}.

But tho God justifies us out of his mere Mercy, yet is he pleased to have us make use of some means, without which he will not grant Justification to us. One of these means is External, the other Internal. The External Means God himself procures for us by his Grace, viz. *The Redemption which is in Jesus Christ* ^{Means of obtaining it.}. The Internal Means God requires of us as a Qualification necessary to Justification, and that is *Faith in Christ Jesus*.

There are two things to be enquired into concerning this justifying Faith : First, its Object ; and Secondly, its Nature. With respect to the Object of this Faith (notwithstanding what some maintain that it is the Merit of Christ, or the special Mercy of God applied to the Elect) we say that it is whole Christ, considered as Prophet, Priest and King : Not only his Propitiation, but likewise his Precepts, Promises and Threatnings, are the Object of a justifying Faith. ^{The Object of a justifying Faith.}

This Faith it self is an Act of our Obedience, which God prescribes to us, which we with all willingness perform, and which in its own nature produces in us an Obedience to all the Commands of God. That justifying Faith is an Act of our Obedience appears from hence, (1.) Because it is commanded us by God ; thus the Apostle ^{And the Nature of it.}, *This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ* : and to it is annexed a promised Reward to the Belie-

¹ Psal. 143. 2. Rom. 3. 23, 24. Eph. 2. 3, 4, 8, 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 3. 3, 4, 5, 6. ² Rom. 3. 24, 25. & 4. 25. & 5. 17, 18, 19. ³ Acts 13. 38, 39. Rom. 4. 5. & 5. 1. Gal. 2. 16. ⁴ 1 John 3. 23.

ver', but Everlasting Damnation to the Infidel': (2.) According to the very Stile of Scripture it is of the nature of Obedience, because of them who did not believe, 'tis said *That they would not believe or come to Christ*³; and the Believers are commended, whilst the Unbelievers are reprov'd⁴.

*Faith not
a merito-
rious Act.*

But whereas we maintain, that Faith is our own Work, we do not thereby mean such a meritorious and efficacious Work, as if by its own worth Remission of Sins and Imputation of Righteousness were due to it; or as if it were our formal Righteousness, which could of it self stand the Test of the just Judgment of God: for they are in the wrong who call Faith the formal Cause of Justification, since there is no such Cause, Justification being the Act of God's mere Mercy. It is therefore such an Act, which tho in its own nature is not perfect, but in many things defective, yet is out of the Goodness of God graciously accepted by him as perfect and compleat; and for the sake of which, God is willing graciously to bestow on Man Remission of Sins, and the Reward of Everlasting Life.

*Excludes
not the
Works it
produceth.*

For the better apprehending of this, it must be observed, that when we say we are justified by Faith, we do not exclude those Works which Faith requires and produces, since they are included in such a Faith. Thus St. Paul tells us, *That in Christ Jesus nothing is of any avail, but Faith which worketh by Love*⁵. And St. James, *Ye see then how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only*⁶. Lastly St. John says, *Little Children, let no Man deceive you, he that doth Righteousness is Righteous, even as he is Righteous*. Nay, Faith without Works is stiled a Dead Faith, and such as cannot work any Justification in us⁷.

*But only
the Works
of the
Law.*

But here 'tis objected, that St. Paul in his *Epistles* to the *Romans* and *Galatians* does all along maintain, that a Man is justified by Faith only, without the Works of the Law. *Ans.* 'Tis here to be remem-

¹ Rom. 10. 9. ² John 3. 33. ³ John. 5. 40. Mat. 23. 37.
⁴ Acts 13. 46. 47. & 17. 11, &c. ⁵ Gal. 5. 6. ⁶ Jam. 2.
24. ⁷ 1 John 3. 24. ⁸ Jam. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

red, that the Apostle does not exclude all Works, but only those of the Law, as he expressly calls them. Now what is meant by the Works of the Law, is worth our while more particularly to enquire. In order to the clearing of this, 'tis in the first place requisite to be acquainted, what sort of Controversies the Apostles had with other Men, that these being rightly understood, the meaning of the Expressions whereby they confuted their Adversaries, may be the more conspicuous.

The first and principal Controversy which the Apostles had with the *Jews* and *Gentiles* was, whether the Christian Religion or Faith in Jesus Christ was the means of attaining to Salvation: or whether the Law of *Moses*, as the *Jews* pretended, or any other Law pretended to by the *Gentiles*, was the means thereof. This Controversy St. Paul discusses at large in his Epistle to the *Romans*, and informs us, that since all Men, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, had sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God, no Man could be justified by the Works of the Law, but that the only means of obtaining Justification was Faith in Christ Jesus.

The Contest of the Apostles with the Jews and Gentiles.

When this principal Point was granted, another Question arose with some *Jewish* Converts that still were zealous for the Law of *Moses*, viz. whether Faith in Jesus Christ was only requisite to Justification and Salvation, or whether the Law and the Legal Ceremonies were not annexed to it. Hence we find that some coming from *Judea* taught the Brethren, that unless they were circumcised according to the manner of *Moses*, they could not be saved; To these the Apostle opposes himself in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, and informs us that *Moses* is not to be joined with Jesus Christ, nor the Works of the Law with Faith; since Faith alone justifies us: so that if any one would pretend to make Circumcision a necessary Qualification, he had fallen from the Faith in Christ. From what has been said, it appears that by the Works of the Law are understood, either those Legal Ceremonies which had already ceased, and were no longer of any avail with God; or else the manner of obey-

And with the converted Jews, Zealots of the Law.

ing required under the Law, *i. e.* a perfect and unfinishing Obedience.

Faith includes entire Obedience.

From hence 'tis plain that by Faith opposed to these Works, is not to be understood a bare Faith, in contradistinction to the Works which it produces; but together with it all that Obedience which God prescribes under the New Covenant, and which is performed by Faith in Jesus Christ. They therefore are mistaken, who interpret the Apostle's Words, speaking of Faith, as if it excluded the Works of which it is productive; since he all along teaches us a quite contrary Doctrine.

St. Paul and St. James reconciled.

Nor is the pretended Difference between *St. Paul* and *St. James* in the point of Justification less easy to be reconciled. *St. Paul* maintains that Faith, or the Obedience of Faith alone justifies; in opposition to those who pretended to the Law alone, or to the Law annexed to the Gospel. *St. James* tells us, that Faith without Works is so far from justifying us, that without good Works 'tis a dead and lifeless Faith; in opposition to those who maintained that a mere Faith or Assent to the Word of God was sufficient, without the Practice of Holiness. And now who is there that reasons rightly, but will freely acknowledg that there is a plain and manifest Agreement between these two Apostles?

Objections answered.

Against this our Opinion 'tis objected, that God does not esteem our imperfect Righteousness proceeding from Faith as perfect, since the Judgment of God is according to Truth: and thus God would esteem that as perfect Righteousness which is not. *Ans.* (1.) We might retort this Argument upon them; by saying that the Judgment of God is according to Truth, therefore the Righteousness of Christ cannot be imputed to Men. (2.) God is so far from esteeming the Righteousness of Man to be perfect, that he looks upon it to be imperfect; but yet graciously accepts of it, as if it were perfect.

Again, in order to shew that by the Works of the Law, not a perfect Obedience, but all manner of Works are understood, which the Apostle excludes from Justification; 'tis objected, that such a perfect Obedience has never been, nor ever can be obtained

in this World ; what need was there then for the Apostle to exclude it ? *Answ.* It was necessary upon the account of the Opinion of the *Jews*, who believed that they might and should be justified by the Works of the Law. In opposition to them the Apostle informs us, that the Law required an entirely perfect Obedience, which since none could perform, it was impossible for any to be justified by the Law ; that therefore he might convince the *Jews*, and shew them the Necessity of embracing the Faith.

But that all Works whatsoever are not excluded from Justification, is plain from hence ; (1.) Because Remission of Sins is not only ascribed to Faith, but likewise to Works : Nay, Remission of Sins, when granted, is said to be repealed, unless we forgive others their Trespases committed against us : (2.) Infidelity, the Cause of Damnation, is always considered as a Work of Disobedience, and the producer of all other evil Works : (3.) The last Judgment, wherein the Sentence of Justification and Condemnation will be put into execution, will be pronounced not according to our Faith, but according to our Works : (4.) Add to this, that otherwise it would follow, that an Impious Man, even consider'd as such, would be justified.

But here they object, that *Rom. 4. 5.* God is said to justify the Ungodly. *Answ.* Here is not meant one that perseveres in his Impiety, or one consider'd as Ungodly even whilst he is justified, but a Person that repents and is converted : That this is the true meaning of the Place is plain, (1.) Because the Ungodly are excluded out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and consequently are not justified. (2.) He that believes is said to be justified, but such an one is not an Ungodly Person, since True and Saving Faith is inconsistent with a State of Sin.

¹ Mat. 6. 14, 15. Mark 11. 25. Acts 3. 19. Luke 24. 47.
² Mat. 18. 33, 34, 35. ³ John 3. 19, 20, 21, 36. Rom. 2.
⁴ Mat. 7. 21. & 16. 27. Rom. 2. 3, 4, &c. 2 Cor. 5.
⁵ 1 Pet. 1. 17. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 12. 14. Mat. 5. 20.
⁶ 1 Cor. 6. 9, 13. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

Phil. 3. 8,
9. explained.

Again they urge the Apostle's Words, Phil. 3. 8, 9. *have suffered the Loss of all things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* Answ. That we are not in this place to understand a bare Faith without Works, is evident from what the Apostle elsewhere attributes to himself, and which he requires of every Christian. We must therefore enquire what he means by his own Righteousness, and that of the Law, as also what is the Righteousness which is of God and through the Faith of Christ. By the Righteousness which is of the Law, he understands that which is according to the Law of *Moses*, described by him *ver. 5.* and this he calls his own, because he received it not thro any special Grace, but as he was by nature a Jew, and bred up under the Law; according to which Law he was blameless, tho at the same time he was a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, nay the chief of Sinners. To this he opposes the Righteousness which is of God, which he had obtained, called so because God had manifested it to the *Jews*, and had announced the Method whereby it was to be attained, viz. by a lively Faith in Christ Jesus productive of Good Works. As if he should have said, "All the Privileges which I had as a Jew I freely disclaim, desiring to be justified by God, not according to the Righteousness which is of the Law, but according to that which God has promised to all those who, thro Faith in Christ, live righteously.

The Object
and End of
Justification.

From these things it appears, that all true Believers, who thro Faith in Christ obey God, whoever they be, *Jews* and *Gentiles*; none excepted, are the Objects of Justification; the End of which is to demonstrate the Justice and Equity, as well as the Goodness and Faithfulness of God.

The Effect of Justification is Peace with God; as with a tender Father, who passing by and forgiving our past Offences, is reconciled with us. Which Peace

1. 1 Cor. 9. 27. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 2 Eph. 4. 24. 3 1 Tim. 1.
15. 4 Rom. 1. 17. Gal. 2. 16. 5 Rom. 3. 28, 29, 30.

includes the Quiet of our Consciences, as being delivered from the Fear of Condemnation; and a Confidence of approaching God, of asking and without Hesitation expecting from him whatever conduces to our Soul's Welfare and Salvation.

S E C T. III.

Of Sanctification.

The next Benefit conferred on the Faithful in this World is *Sanctification*. Now to sanctify, according to the proper Signification of the Word, denotes to set something apart from common Use, and to dedicate it to the Worship of God. Thus the Persons, Places, Vessels, &c. set apart for the Service of God, are said to be hallowed or sanctified. And in this sense Christians are said to be a Holy People, a chosen Generation, &c.

But whereas this being separated or set apart is with a design that we should live to God, and by Lives conformable to the Divine Law be separated from the profane part of Mankind; hence it is that to be Holy signifies to live holily: and thus Sanctification in the largest sense denotes Regeneration it self.

But the Sanctification we now speak of, more peculiarly so called, is conferred on those who are already regenerated by Faith, and lead Godly Lives; and is a more perfect Separation of the Sons of God from this impure World. This has reference partly to the Understanding, and partly to the Will.

As it regards the Understanding, it is a clearer Illustration in the knowledge of the Divine Truth, or a fuller Apprehension of the meaning of what is contained in the Word of God; so that he opens the Minds of the Believers, that they may clearly and distinctly apprehend all those things which are necessary to confirm their Belief in the Divine Promises, and to excite them to a Proficiency in Holiness. With respect to the Will, Sanctification consists of two

¹ 1 Pet. 2. 9.

parts, viz. an Aversion from all Evil, which contains in it a Hatred of Sin, and an ardent Love of what is good. For whereas the Mind of Man being more and more enlightened with the Knowledge of God, is enflamed with a greater Love towards him, and with a more fervent desire of Salvation: so does it conceive a greater Hatred towards Sin, as being the Hindrance of his Salvation, and is more readily inclined to the Practice of Vertue.

*How God
works it in
Man.*

The Means by which God bestows this on Man, is, by supplying him with the Assistance of the Holy Ghost, whereby he so far corroborates and confirms him in what is Good, that he can by no means endure the Temptations to Sin; or if he be subject to them, can easily surmount them. God therefore bestows the greatest Assistance on those that are his, he illuminates their Minds, directs their Wills, and over-rules the outward Members of their Bodies that they may not be the Instruments of Unrighteousness. But we must beware, after all, of maintaining that God works this Ardor in the Faithful by such an irresistible Power as is inconsistent with the Freedom of Obedience.

S E C T. IV.

Of being sealed by the Holy Ghost.

*Various
Acceptations
of the
Word Holy
Ghost in
Scripture.*

The last Benefit conferred on the Faithful by God in this World, is sealing them by the Holy Ghost. Now in Scripture there are several Significations of the Word *Holy Ghost*. As (1.) It denotes God himself who is a Spirit, and whose Spirit is the Holy Ghost, which is sometime called the Soul of God. (2.) The Spirit of God, which proceeds from him, as his Essential Virtue, by which God the Father works all things, especially such as tend to the sanctifying of Men; who also was sent forth by the Son. (3.) The Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which God by that Spirit communicates to Men, which are sometimes simply

Jer. 51. 14. Amos 6. 8. Isa. 63. 10. * John 15. 26.
1 Cor. 12. 11. † Acts 2. 4. & 19. 2, 6. ‡ Cor. 12.

erned the Holy Ghost, sometimes the Spirit, with expressing the Gift which it operates; thus 'tis said the spirit of Prophecy, of Tongues, of discerning of spirits, &c.

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost are various: Some only peculiar to the Ambassadors whom God sent to Men; others common to all the Faithful. Again, the former of these were of two sorts; some necessary to those Messengers themselves, not only for the due Administration of their Office, but likewise that they themselves should be fully informed of the Divine Will, such as the inlightning their Understanding in the knowledg of such things, which otherwise would have been for ever concealed. Others were necessary to them for the sake of other Men, such as (1.) The Gift of *Tongues* to proclaim to the World the Wisdom revealed to them. (2.) The Gift of working Miracles, whereby to confirm the Doctrine which they taught, and the Truth of their Mission. (3.) The Power of communicating these Gifts to those who embraced the Christian Religion.

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed either only on the Messengers of God:

The Gifts common to all Believers, whether Teachers or Disciples, are called by the general Term of the Holy Ghost: and consist partly in the Illumination of the Understanding, which is chiefly to be attained by the Word of God, tho the meaning thereof is more illustrated to the Mind by the Influence of the Holy Ghost; and partly in exciting the Will to all Good, especially by the Promises contained in the Scripture, wherein is such a Power and Efficacy, as by it the Man is moved with a kind of Divine *Affatus* to the chearful Practice of Vertue. In this sense is the Word *Spirit* generally used, when we are said to walk after the Spirit, to mortify the Deeds of the Flesh by the Spirit, &c.

Or on all the Faithful in general.]

But here it may be asked, what that Gift of the Holy Ghost is, by which the Faithful are said to be sealed? Some are of opinion that by the Holy Ghost such Gifts are meant, as were bestowed on the Faithful at the beginning of the Gospel, and which we stile extraordinary: and that these Gifts were called

What may be understood by being sealed by the Holy Ghost.

the sealing, since on whomsoever they were bestowed they were as it were a Pledg to them that they were included in the Divine Covenant, and had a Title to the Everlasting Inheritance. In this sense they explain the Words of the Apostle ¹, *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again unto Fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father.* From these Words they infer, that the Spirit is not given to Slaves, and that it is a certain Sign of the Gentiles being made the People of God. The same they take to be the Meaning of *Eph. 1. 13, 14. & 2 Cor. 1. 21, 22.* And truly upon a due Consideration of those Texts, it cannot be denied but that this is the most suitable sense of these Words, and which has nothing in it contrary to the Rule of Faith. However it seems that some other Gift is denoted by being sealed by the Holy Ghost; and that it ought not to be restrained to those primitive Times, viz. such a Gift, as is granted to all the Faithful as a Reward of their Obedience, and a Pledg by which they are assured of the ardent Love of God towards them. This Gift is somewhat different from those miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, granted to the first Preachers of the Gospel: since the latter served only to confirm the Truth of the Evangelical Doctrine, and to shew that the Man who was endued with them was the Messenger of God, and that what he taught was to be received as coming from God. But these were not an infallible Argument of Piety and of the Divine Favour, because they were sometimes granted to Men who were wicked and displeased God, of which number was the Traitor *Judas* ²: Whereas this Gift is bestowed on none but the true Believers and Godly, as a Confirmation of the Love of God towards them, who approves of their Piety.

*In what
sense it is
thus called.*

The being sealed therefore by the Holy Ghost, is a more certain and solid Ratification to us of Eternal Life and of the Divine Favour, by its being shed abroad in the Hearts of the Faithful. For God by his Spirit confirms the Faithful in their Belief of his Promises contained in the Scripture, imprints more

¹ Rom. 3. 15. ² Luke 10. 17.

Chap. 3. Body of Divinity.

forcibly on their Minds the Hopes of the Heavenly Life, and declares that he has adopted them for his Sons, and made them Heirs to the Enjoyments of Heaven. In the mean time, whilst those Promises are still to be fulfilled, and Eternal Life is but in expectation, lest the Faithful should despond or be doubtful, he grants them his Spirit, as a Pledg to assure them of his Promise, and of the certainty of their attaining to future Glory.

But of what nature this Operation of God is, cannot be so easily determined; because the Spirit works *What it is properly.* in us after an ineffable and incomprehensible manner: we are sensible indeed that we have obtained it, but when or how we know not. In my Opinion, it is a more strong Persuasion of the Divine Promises, or rather of the Hope conceived with respect to those Promises, impressed on the Minds of the Faithful, by which they are rendered so assured of Eternal Salvation, as if they had it present to their View; and conceive a Pleasure in the Confirmation of this Hope, much like to that which they will feel in the actual Enjoyment of Happiness.

Here it may be asked, Whether this Gift be granted to all that truly believe? *Ans.* It does not seem as *answered.* if it were, nor is it necessary; since 'tis bestowed in order to render them certain of their Salvation. Now this Certainty may be deduced from the Word of God, and the Promises clearly contained therein, which a Believer may assuredly apply to himself; and this is as much as is commonly sufficient.

However such Cases may happen, wherein God may, *In what Cases granted to the Faithful.* if applied to by earnest and fervent Prayer, bestow his holy Spirit as a further Confirmation of the Hopes conceived of his Promises. When a Man, for instance, being oppressed with some grievous Calamity or Persecution, or struggling against some great Temptation to which he may yield, has recourse unto God by Prayer; in such a Case we say, that God usually grants this Gift, whereby he confirms the Man in the Hope of Eternal Life, and presents as it were the Greatness and Glory thereof to his View; that

so being inflamed with an ardent Desire after this Glory, he may the more chearfully proceed in a Religious Course, rejecting and despising all the Allurements and Enjoyments which this World can propose to divert him from the pursuit thereof. This is the Peace of God, by which the Faithful being armed cannot only bear up with an Evenness of Mind under the very greatest Hardships, but can rejoice and glory in them even to Death. Of this we are informed by the Examples of several Martyrs, who with Songs in their Mouths, and Joy in their Hearts, endured the severest Torments and the most cruel Deaths. This they did upon the prospect of a future Reward, which they had constantly in their Eyes, and after which they were so eager in their pursuits, that they surmounted all the Difficulties which lay in their way to it: and this was effected by that Joy of the Holy Ghost, a Joy unspeakable, which was shed abroad in their Hearts.

S E C T. V.

Of the Certainty of Salvation.

Variety of Opinions about it. From what has been said concerning the saving Acts of God, 'tis easy to infer what we ought to think of the certainty of Salvation, which Believers have in this World. But since there are variety of Opinions in this Matter, it will not be improper to take this Point into a more particular examination. In the first and chief place we are to enquire, what Certainty or Assurance properly means, that so the Terms being explained, there may be the less Ambiguity in the Dispute, and the State of the Question may be fairly laid down. For both those of the *Popish* and *Reformed* Religion complain, that the Question is not rightly stated on either side, but that their Opinions about it are represented amiss. As for our parts we shall ingenuously propose their Opinions so far as they are deducible from their own Writings, without attributing any thing to either of them, which they do not freely own.

Bellar-

Bellarmino * makes mention of several sorts of Certainty; but we shall only just touch upon those, which are necessary for explaining the Question in hand. Certainty or Assurance denotes a firm and fixed Perswasion of the Mind concerning either the Truth, or Goodness, or Necessity of any thing; which he says, sometimes may happen not to be grounded on sound Reason, nay may be false, as arising from a weak Judgment, or violent Passions; of which nature is the Certainty of the Vulgar: and this *Bellarmino* would have to be called improper Assurance. But this can by no means be stiled Assurance; since the Assent which is given to any thing, of which we are not assured by sound Reason, is not Certainty, but Opinion. Certainty then, or Assurance, properly denotes a firm Assent, which being founded on a solid Judgment and infallible Reason, wholly excludes all just reason of doubting or fearing any thing to the contrary, after a full and diligent Enquiry made into all Circumstances. This Certainty is either self-evident, arising from the manifest Force of first Principles, which are undeniable; or else somewhat more obscure, proceeding from a clear stating and Confirmation of the things themselves: so that upon a full and due Examination, no just and solid Reason can be assigned, why any Man cannot be certain of a thing with such an Assurance as is implied in the thing itself. This is the Certainty of Faith, inferior to Science, but superior to Opinion; and of this Certainty it is that we are at present to discourse, *viz.* Whether a Believer by the Certainty of Divine Faith (in which there can be no Falshood) can be assured that his Sins are forgiven him by God, and that he is in a State of Salvation.

But here arises a double Dispute about the Certainty of Salvation: for 'tis either ask'd, Whether a Believer can be sure that the State wherein he is at present is a State of Salvation? or whether he can be assured not only of his present, but also of his future State, *viz.* that he shall persevere to the very End in a State of Salvation?

Several
Kinds of
Certainty.

A twofold
Dispute about the
Certainty
of Salvation.

* Lib. 3. de Justificatione, Cap. 2.

The Controversy between the Papists and Protestants stated.

As to the former of these Questions, it may admit of a twofold Signification. (1.) That a Believer may be certain of his Salvation under this Condition, that he believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and live conformably to his Precepts; of this Certainty there lies no dispute. (2.) He may be absolutely assured that in the State wherein he is, his Sins are forgiven, and he himself is in a State of Salvation; which Salvation he will certainly attain, if he continue in that State unto the End. The latter of these Notions is denied by the *Romanists*, and maintained by us *Protestants*. But here some distinction ought to be made, *viz.* We do not allow of their Opinion who maintain that justifying Faith consists in a Belief that our Sins are forgiven, and consequently that Remission of Sins not only in the course of Nature, but in the order of Time precedes our Faith and Conversion; which is false, and contrary to Scripture. But we assert, that a Man who already believes in Christ, and obeys God out of a Principle of Faith, may be certain of his Justification, and consequently is in a State of Salvation. The Question therefore (as *Bellarmino* has stated it) is, Whether any Man ought or can, without a special Revelation, be certain with an Assurance of Divine Faith, wherein there is no Fallacy, that his Sins are forgiven him.

A Believer may be certain that he is in a State of Salvation.

As for our parts we say, that a Believer not only can be certain that his State is a State of Salvation, but also that it is impossible for him to do otherwise, if he make a right use of his Reason and Judgment. For if he cannot be assured of this, it is upon one of these two accounts; either that he cannot know what sort of State the State of Salvation is, and consequently whether he be in such a State, which is absurd; since 'tis so plainly described in the Gospel: Or if he does know it, yet a Man who is in a State of Salvation, cannot be certain he is so; from whence it would follow that a Man cannot know himself; which is a Task not only possible, but easy, would he but turn his Thoughts that way.

Objections answered.

To this Doctrine several Objections are started: As first, they urge what we read of *St. Paul*, 1 Cor. 4. 4 who tho he was conscious to himself of no Crime committed,

mitted, yet durst not apply this Assurance to himself: For his Words are, *I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that justifieth me is the Lord.* Answ. That the Apostle in this place does not treat of his own Faith, by which as a Christian he was justified before God, appears from other Passages of his *Epistles*: But he speaks of his special Office, and defends himself against some malicious Slanderers. He says therefore, *That he was faithful to the Lord, that he was conscious of no Offence he had committed, therefore he did not regard the Judgment of any Man, being the Minister of the Lord, to whom alone he was accountable.*

Again, they say that we are commanded to *work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*; whereas we are elsewhere taught, *That perfect Love casteth out Fear*. Answ. We have already evinced that St. *John* speaks either of the Fear of the Cross, or of the Fear of Divine Punishment arising from an evil Conscience, whereby we are afraid of God as an Avenger of our Sins; but not of such a Fear of our selves, whereby we are afraid lest we should fall from the Practice of Piety, and thereby forfeit the Divine Grace of which we are Partakers. 'Tis such a Fear and pious Sollicitude that St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* require of us, and which is so far from being repugnant to perfect Love, that 'tis a manifest Token of it.

As to the second Question, viz. Whether a Believer may be absolutely certain, that he shall persevere in the true Faith, and die in it, and consequently be saved? We say, (1.) That he may be certain by the Promise of God, that he will remain in the Divine Favour, and attain Everlasting Life, if he persevere in the Faith and Obedience of God's Commands. (2.) He may be certain, that he is in such a State, wherein if he perseveres, he shall be saved for ever. (3.) He may be certain, that he can by the Grace of God persevere in that State, so as no Temptation can be so great, but what by the Divine Grace assisting him he may resist. But that he can be absolutely certain of

The Question between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants stated.

¹ 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7, 8. Rom. 8. 38, 39. ² Phil. 2. 13. ¹ Pet. 1. 17. ³ 1 John 4. 18.

his persevering in the Faith and in the Divine Favour even unto the End, this is what we deny : And for the following Reasons.

*A Believer
not abso-
lutely cer-
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verance.*

First, because such a Perseverance is no where promised to the Faithful. Secondly, because all those earnest Exhortations, by which we are exhorted to work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and to beware lest there be in any of us an evil Heart of Unbelief, &c. are inconsistent with such a Certainty. Thirdly, from hence would arise many Absurdities, such as these. (1.) That a Believer is assured, that he cannot fall into such Sins as are inconsistent with Faith and a good Conscience, such as Adultery, Murder and Idolatry ; or that if he should fall into them, they would be no hindrance to his Salvation. And (2.) That he cannot, or at least should not die in them ; but before the End of his Life, even at the last Moment of it, he shall by the Divine Grace be renewed again to Repentance. (3.) Tho it happen that the sense of this Certainty should be interrupted by some grievous Sins, yet it would be restored before Death. Now all these things are absurd, and contrary to Scripture.

*Objections
answered.*

But here it is objected, that the saving Acts of God, viz. Election, Adoption, Justification, Sanctification, and especially being sealed by the Holy Ghost, do render a Man certain of future Glory. *Ans.* These are not instantaneous Acts, performed in a moment, and which when once perfected are never changed ; but continued Acts, which last so long as the requisite Qualification lasts ; and are as often interrupted, as the Man by forsaking a Christian Life commits such things as are repugnant to true Holiness.

To this you will say, that the Holy Ghost seals us to the day of Redemption. *Ans.* This is true ; but in the same manner and upon the same condition by which God promises Redemption to us, viz. if we persevere in the Faith unto the End. For this Sealing ought exactly to correspond to the Contract to which it is applied. As therefore God has no where promised the Faithful that they shall finally persevere ; but

¹ Eph. 4. 30.

only that if they persevere, they should attain Everlasting Life : so likewise the Holy Ghost, which is given to us as the Seal of the Divine Promises, does not assure us that we shall always abide in the Faith, but only renders us certain of the Favour of God so long as we do remain in the Faith. Upon this account it is that the Apostle admonishes us not to grieve the Holy Spirit.

They add, that *Rom. 11. 29.* 'tis said, *That the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.*

Ans^r. The Gifts of God are of two sorts : some depend wholly upon the Will of God, and are bestowed by him on Man, without the Stipulation of any Duty to be performed on Man's part ; of which nature are the sending of Christ as the Saviour of the World, his calling us to partake of the Heavenly Grace, with the like. Others do indeed depend upon the Will of God, but which he is not pleased to bestow upon Man, without the intervention of his free Obedience, as a pre-requisite Condition for the obtaining those Blessings : and of this nature are Adoption, Remission of Sins, Eternal Life, and all those Blessings which God promises to Man as the Reward of Obedience. The former of these are indeed without Repentance, but the latter are not, unless the Condition upon which they are founded be duly performed.

S E C T. VI.

Of the actual Reprobation of Infidels.

The Acts which God exerts towards impenitent Sinners in this World, are quite contrary to those which he exercises towards the Faithful and Obedient. The first of these is **REPROBATION**, which is a Judicial Act of God, by which he casts away from himself the Impious and the Unbelievers, and for their Obstinacy destines them to Eternal Destruction ; and if they persevere in their Wickedness, will cast them off and punish them to all Eternity.

Reprobation,

*A Judicial
Act of God;*

That Reprobation is a Judicial Act of God, is evident from the Nature of the Divine Legislation: For since God has prescribed Laws to Men, and established them upon a promised Reward and a threatened Punishment, it appears that he will act with Mankind as a Judge, especially in the weighty Concernment of Eternal Salvation and Damnation. Now to inflict a Punishment on the Guilty, is a Judicial Act. Since then the actual Condemnation of the Wicked is a Judicial Act of God, it is plain that Reprobation, by which Men are destin'd to Punishment, is likewise of the same nature.

*And not an
Act of absolute
Dominion.*

As to what some imagine, that Reprobation is an Act of absolute Dominion, and not of Divine Judgment, herein they are egregiously mistaken. For the Dominion or Sovereignty of God ought not and cannot be separated from his Justice. And tho God sometimes deals with Men as an absolute Lord; as in prescribing of Laws, exercising the Godly, and in other Works, by which he designs the chief good of Men: yet he never declares that he will act as an absolute Sovereign, laying aside all Judicial Acts, when the Everlasting Condemnation of Men is concerned; but all his Proceedings are Judicial, and the just Retributions of Sin.

*Objections
answered.*

But it may be said, that Condemnation it self is indeed a Judicial Act, but not Reprobation: Since it depends on the Divine Will and Pleasure, whom he will, or will not reprobate. *Ans.* If Condemnation be a Judicial Act, it follows that Reprobation is so too: for since the very punishing is a Judicial Act, how can it be conceived that the determining to Punishment is not the Action of a Judge?

You will say that Reprobation is not a determining to Punishment, but a bare Preterition, or a Non-Election to Glory: But God out of his own good Pleasure chuses whom he will to Salvation, and passes by whom he pleases. *Ans.* (1.) Of all Men in the World they ought not to make this Exception, who define Reprobation to be a Determination to eternal Destruction. (2.) Tho some of them use softer Expressions, yet they are really of the same mind with the others; because Preterition or Non-Election, is

(as

Chap. 3. *Body of Divinity.*

as we have elsewhere proved) as much the Cause of damnation, as a positive Appointment thereto can

Again it may be urged that there are two Acts of divine Reprobation, one respecting the End, the other the Means tending to that End: The former is destining a Man to the Exercise of the Divine Justice; so that the End of God properly speaking is not the Destruction of a Creature, but the Manifestation of his Justice, which is illustrated by the deserved Punishment of a Creature: the latter is determining him to damnation. The one (say they) is an Act of Dominion, the other a Judicial Act. *Ans.* (1.) This is a very trifling Exception to say, that the End of God in reprobating is not properly speaking the destruction of a Creature; provided it appears that God has resolved upon the destruction of his Creature, in order to obtain his ultimate End and Design, viz. the Manifestation of his Justice: for that Means is connected with the End, without any Action of Man intervening. (2.) It is unconceivable how the Justice of God can be manifested by an Act not of Justice but of absolute Dominion. True it is, an Act of Dominion may also be an Act of Divine Justice, and thereby the Justice of God may be manifested; but it is impossible that it should be manifested by any other Act than that of Justice.

But not to insist any farther on so plain an Argument; since from what has been said it appears that Reprobation is a Judicial Act, it is likewise evident that the Objects thereof are none else but the Wicked and the Unbelievers: for the Divine Punishment cannot be justly inflicted on any others. 'Tis to these alone that God threatens Damnation; and consequently they are the only Persons whom God has resolved to condemn. And truly this actual Reprobation is nothing else, than a particular Application of the General Decree of damning the Unbelievers, made in time, whereby God looks upon every Infidel as one that is to be damned, and whom he will really damn,

¹ John 3. 17, 18, 19, 36. Mar. 16. 16. Rom. 2. 8, 9. Cor. 6. 9, 10.

unless he repent. By the Wicked and Unbelievers we mean such as resist the Operations of Divine Grace, which God makes use of for the Conversion of Sinners; or those, who commit such things, as will preclude them from all hopes of Everlasting Salvation.

*Wherein it
consists,
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ces thereof.*

The Act therefore of Reprobation consists in this, that God no longer looks upon obstinate Sinners as his People, to whom he designs Salvation, but counts them as such who are to be damned. This commonly draws along with it several other penal Acts, which are so many Tokens of the Divine Displeasure and Vengeance: Such for instance, as (1.) A forgetting of former Good Deeds. (2.) A Denial of Grace, which chiefly consists in withdrawing the Word of God, by which they ought to be converted; and in removing all the other External Means tending thereto. (3.) A taking away from them all hopes, at least for a time, of having another Call, or more Grace vouchsafed unto them. These are the Penal Acts of God, which are usually tho not always consequent to Reprobation: so that tho we may infer that the Man against whom they are exerted is justly reprobated by God for his Sins; yet we cannot say that they are not reprobated, who have none of those Signs appearing upon them.

S E C T. VII.

Of the Divine Blinding and Hardening of Men.

*Blinding
and Hard-
ning, what.*

The second Act of the Divine Displeasure exerted against the Impenitent in this Life is Blinding them, which is a Consequence of Reprobation; when Sinners are so far reprobated, that by the Permission and just Judgment of God they are under the Clouds of gross Ignorance. For upon removal of the Word of God, all sound Doctrine falls to the ground; and the Word of the Devil, which is the Word of seducing and lying, comes into its place. Near akin to this is Hardening, which is the Act of God, by which he delivers up those Men who are wicked and rejected by him to their own impure Lusts; which differs from

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Blinding in this, that the latter properly resides in the Understanding, whilst the former prevails over the Will: However, they do mutually produce one another. For when the Understanding is once darkened and its Light extinguished, how suddenly does a Man not only fall into Error, but into a Profaneness of Life? And on the other side, when a Man's Heart is hardned, and bent the wrong way, what Mists arise from the Passions which cloud and darken the Understanding; just as thick Fogs obscure the Light of the Sun?

But this Divine Blinding and Hardning is not the natural Cause of a Man's being necessarily immersed in Errors, or of his falling into Sin; but only the occasional Cause, in that the Man through the Malice of his own Heart abuses it to the greater blinding and hardening of himself: Whereas this Divine Punishment should of it self tend to make the Man sensible of the Anger and Vengeance of God, and excite him to repent and seek for the Pardon of his Sins. For the farther clearing of this, 'tis to be noted, that both Blinding and Hardning are attributed in Scripture not only to God, but also to Man¹, and to the Devil².

Not the natural but occasional Cause of Sin.

A Man blinds and hardens himself, when he will not hearken to, nor understand, nor obey the Word when announced to him; but hunts after Reasons to invalidate the Authority of the Word, and so despises and rejects it. This he does either through the pure Wickedness of his own Heart, or else by being carried away by some violent Passion, such for instance as the Love of Pleasure, Profit, or of any Vice to which he has been accustomed.

After what manner a Man hardens himself.

The Devil blinds the Minds of Men, not by insufling Blindness, or working Hardness in their Hearts, this being out of his power; but by persuading, exciting and stirring up the Passions, by presenting proper Objects to tempt them to Sin, and by the emotion of the Animal Spirits, raising in their Imaginations sinful Ideas. All these Methods have only a Moral

How the Devil does it.

¹ Ezek. 12. 2. Jer. 5. 3. Zech. 7. 11, 12. Exod. 7. 13, 14. & 8. 15. & 9. 34. ² 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Eph. 2. 2.

Prevalency, which a Man, by the assistance of God's Grace obtained by fervent Prayer, may easily resist.

*In what
sense God
may be said
to do it.*

But God as an incensed Judge blinds and hardens Men for their past, or even present Transgressions: not indeed by effecting of Blindness, or infusing of Wickedness, or hardning a Man physically, so as that he could not avoid sinning; for then he would be the Author of Sin, which is repugnant to his Holiness; but by dispensing his Grace after a wonderful manner, and exercising his severe Judgments so, as that a Man through the Malice of his own Heart takes an occasion from thence of hardning himself: whereas on the contrary, had he any Love to Piety, he would from the very same Act of God be moved to Repentance.

*The Acts
by which
God usually
blinds and
hardens
Sinners.*

To render this the more evident, let us consider distinctly the various Acts by which this Blinding and Hardning is usually effected. For besides the penal Acts which we said were the consequence of Reprobation, God does usually blind and harden Sinners by these following Methods. (1.) He removes those Obstacles, by which they were before restrained from falling headlong into all sorts of Sins; and hence they take occasion of going on in their Wickedness. (2.) He causes his Word sometimes to be proposed obscurely in Parables and Figures, that so unless they diligently attend, and bring a teachable Heart along with them, they will never attain to a right understanding thereof; and hence the Wicked take an occasion of hardning themselves. (3.) He gives them up to the Temptations of Satan, and permits him to make use of all his Force and Subtilty against them. (4.) He lays in their way various Occasions of erring and sinning, viz. by permitting false Prophets and Teachers to be among them. (5.) He permits even their wicked Designs to go on for a time successfully; and hence they are more and more hardned in Sin, looking upon this their outward Felicity as an Argument of the Divine Favour, and by this means they are involved in Worldly Lusts. (6.) He does not suffer them to be excited to Repentance by any Remorse of Conscience; and hence such are said to be

Am. 1. 6.

ἀνίστασθαι 'past feeling, having not the least Sting of Conscience remaining; and that upon them a Spirit of Slumber was sent².

From all these Acts of Divine Blinding and Hardening, 'tis plain, that none of them of it self does work Wickedness in Men; but are such as Bad Men abuse, to render themselves the more hardened: whereas being warned by the Judgments and Long-suffering of God, they ought to have been excited to Repentance. For according to the different Tempers and Dispositions of Men, one and the same Act of God has different Effects.

None of them the natural Cause of Man's Wickedness.

In what sense the Penal Acts of Reprobation, &c. are stiled Temporal Punishments.

All these Punishments are called Temporal; because tho they are the Forerunners of Eternal Damnation, and if a Man is involved in them to the end of his Life, they will unavoidably deliver him up to Everlasting Misery; yet it may happen, that the Man being brought over to repent, may be exempted from those Punishments, be struck out of the List of the Reprobate, and for his Faith and Repentance be reckoned among the Elect, and consequently may escape Everlasting Punishment. 'Tis true, the Case of the Reprobate, and especially of such as are judicially blinded and hardened, is very deplorable and almost desperate; but tho it be next to impossible to renew such again by Repentance, yet (as we have elsewhere hinted³) we cannot imagine that whilst God affords them Life, Health, and the use of their Reason, the Door of his Mercy should be so far shut against them in this World, as that they should be beyond all possibility of repenting and of obtaining their Pardon.

¹ Eph. 4. 19. ² Rom. 11. 8. ³ B. V. Ch. 25. §. 8.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Promises and Threatnings of the New Covenant, which have their Completion in the World to come.

HAVING treated at large of the Divine Promises and Threatnings with respect to this World, it remains that we should in this Chapter take into consideration those that have their Completion in the next. But whereas there is between this and the future Life a Middle State of separated Souls, we shall premise some things concerning that State. And tho it might be more safe to say nothing of it, since the Scripture affords us but little Light in the Case, and consequently it would be Rashness to presume to assert much about it; yet for the avoiding of some gross and pernicious Errors, it may not be amiss to explain some things relating thereto, as far as the Scripture is our Guide,

S E C T. I.

Of the State of separated Souls after Death, and particularly of PURGATORY.

Separated Souls neither die with their Bodies, nor sleep; nor in a State of Separation are in perfect Happiness or Misery.

In the first place then we maintain, That the Soul does not die with, but survives the Body. This Truth is not only evinced by sound and philosophical Arguments, but also from several clear and undoubted Testimonies of Scripture, as appears by the Places referred to in the Notes ¹. Secondly, we say that the Soul which survives the Body does not sleep, nor is deprived of all Thought, which State of Sleep is next to Annihilation. For it seems inconsistent with the Na-

¹ Eccles. 12. 7. Mat. 10. 28. 2 Cor. 5. 8. Phil. 1. 23, &c.

ture of a Spirit, whose very Essence it is to think, that it should be in a dosing Condition. Thirdly, we maintain, that the Souls of the Saints do not fully triumph in Heaven, nor enjoy the Beatifick Vision of God: nor are the Souls of the wicked properly tormented with Hell-fire, till the Day of Judgment. We make no question, but that the Souls of the Just are in a certain State of Security, are as happy as their Conditions will admit of, and are filled with an inward Joy, which is as it were the Beginning and Prelude to their future Glory: but then we say that their Triumph will not be perfect till the Day of Judgment, when their last Enemy Death shall be destroyed, and their Souls re-united to their Bodies after they are risen from the Grave. And in like manner the Souls of the Wicked are not immediately upon Death tormented with Hell-fire, but 'tis highly probable that they are kept bound in Darknes to the day of Judgment, and in the mean time are cruciated and tormented with Horror and Despair, the beginning of the Tortures they shall feel in Hell.

This whole Point may be very well illustrated by *In what* the Similitude of Sleep, so often used in Scripture. Let *sense the* us then for once apply the State of Sleep to that of *Dead are* Death, or rather the condition of those who sleep to *said to* the Dead, and the Point will be clear'd. In Sleep the *sleep.* whole Man is at rest, so that he is incapable of discerning any outward Objects: and yet the Soul does not sleep, nor is it deprived of its internal Operations, as appears by the many Dreams which happen in our Sleep: so likewise in Death, the whole Man is dead, so that he can neither perceive any external Objects, nor exercise any Functions by the help of the Body; and yet the Soul survives and does not sleep, but exerts its internal Functions of thinking: Hence it is that not the Souls, but the Men themselves are said to die and sleep. Again, some Dreams are pleasant, refresh us, and are delightful in the Contemplation; others frightful and terrible, representing all manner of evil Ideas to our Fancy, with which we are as much affected and terrified as if they were actually present: So likewise the State of separate Souls is Twofold, those of the Faithful and Pious are soothed with calm
and

and pleasing Thoughts, arising from the certain hope of an approaching Happiness, of which they partake as much as their Capacities will allow: But as for the Souls of the Wicked and Unbelievers, they are continually terrified with the apprehension of an impending Punishment, which they look upon as actually present, and are tormented with the Thoughts of it. Lastly, when a Man is raised from Sleep, all the Operations of Life are again exerted, and the Soul by the Organs of the Body perceives all manner of Ideas that are externally offered to its View: So when Men are raised from the Dead, the Operations of the whole Man will again be of force, and exercised according to the different States wherein they shall be in the other World. This Opinion is very agreeable to the Nature of a separated Soul and the last Judgment, as also to the Testimonies of Holy Writ, wherein any mention is made of Men deceased. But should any one maintain that the Celestial Glory commences at the very Death of the Godly; and that the Wicked are no sooner dead than they are cast into Hell-fire, we shall not stand to dispute the Point with him. We have only advanced what we think to be most probable, upon a due consideration of the nature of the last Judgment, and the Testimonies of Scripture.

The Popish Opinion about Purgatory.

But the *Romanists* are fallen into a very dangerous and pernicious Error; who have not only invented certain subterraneous Prisons, in one of which the Souls of the Faithful under the Old Testament were kept till the Death of Christ and his Descent into Hell; and in the other the Souls of Infants dying unbaptized, where they shall remain for ever, upon the account of Original Guilt: but have likewise feigned a certain Purgatorial Fire, adjacent to Hell, which is in the very Centre of the Earth, wherein as in a Prison the Souls are purged after this Life, which were not fully purified here; that being thus cleansed they may be admitted into Heaven, into which nothing unclean shall enter. Hence it is that they have formed to themselves a threefold State of Souls after Death, viz. Hell, Heaven and Purgatory, into which the Souls upon their separation from the Body are immediately received,

ceived, according to the difference of their Conditions. They say that the Souls of the *Catholicks*, who die without having made Satisfaction, or obtained Indulgence for their Sins in this Life, go into Purgatory; who cannot be admitted into Heaven, till they have made that Satisfaction in Purgatory, which they neglected to do upon Earth.

The Absurdity of this Fiction will appear from the following Arguments. First, there is no mention in Scripture of this Purgatorial Fire. For (1.) The very word Purgatory is not so much as once named therein. (2.) There is not the least hint in Scripture of such a Purgation of Souls after Death. (3.) We nowhere read of such a purifying Fire, or of any Punishment after Death, whereby Satisfaction is made for the Guilt of Venial Sins. (4.) Nor is there any mention of Sacrifices or Intercessions, that are to be performed for the delivering of Souls out of Purgatory.

Secondly, there are many things in Scripture, which can by no means be reconciled to this Purgatorial Fire. As (1.) The Faithful after Death are said *to be present with the Lord*; *to depart in Peace, and rest in their Beds*; *to rest from their Labours, and their Works to follow them*. Now where there is so intense a Pain as to be next to the Torments of Hell, there can be no Rest or Quiet. (2.) The Examples of several dying Saints are against it: thus *Stephen* at his Death recommended his Soul to the Lord Jesus; *Simeon* cried out, *That the Lord had let him depart in Peace*. Add to these the Examples of *Lazarus*, who was carried as soon he died into *Abraham's Bosom*, and of the Thief upon the Cross, whom our Saviour assured, that he should be with him that day in Paradise. (3.) We say, That the Faithful who die in the Lord have a full Remission of all their Sins through Christ. And if these things are so, what need is there of any Purgatorial Fire to cleanse those who are already purged from their Sins?

¹ 2 Cor. 5. 8. ² Isa. 57. 2. ³ Rev. 14. 13. ⁴ Acts 7. 59. ⁵ Luk. 2. 29. ⁶ Luk. 16. 22. ⁷ Luk. 23. 43. ⁸ 1 Joh. 1. 7. Acts 13. 38, 39. Rom. 5. 1.

And to
Reason.

Thirdly and lastly, this Purgatorial Fire is repugnant to Reason. For no Spot can be imprinted on the Soul by Sin, since it is an incorporeal and spiritual Substance ; but only Guilt is contrasted : Nor is the Turpitude of the Sin taken away by the Punishment ; for at that rate a Thief after he was whipt, or burnt in the Hand, would become more holy than he was before he was punished.

The Rise of
the Opinion
about Purgatory.

Purgatory therefore seems to have derived its Origin from the *Platonick* Philosophy ; which Fire however is very different from that which the *Papists* pretend to. For the *Platonists*, whom the Fathers follow'd, tell us of a Fire that shall be kindled at the Consummation of all things, by which both the World and the Men of the World shall be purged. But by degrees, for the sake of Gain, this Purgatorial Fire of the *Papists* was invented, as well as Indulgences, which the Pope sold out at a stated Price for the delivering of Souls out of Purgatory. For the upholding of this pious Fraud, they pretend to several Texts of Scripture, the chief of which we will examine.

Mat. 12.
32. explained.

The first Text produced by them which we shall mention, is Mat. 12. 32. *Whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.* From hence they infer that there are some Sins, which are not remitted in this World, but are so in the next : But they are not remitted in Hell, therefore they must be in Purgatory. *Ans.* (1.) There is no greater Consequence to be drawn from this way of arguing, than if I should say, that a Believer's Sins are not imputed to him in this, nor in the other World ; and another should infer, that therefore there are some Sins not imputed in this World, which shall be imputed in the next. (2.) We own indeed that some Sins are remitted in the World to come, viz. those which are remitted here, and which God will remember no more. (3.) In Purgatory, Sins are not remitted, but severely punished, and thereby Satisfaction is made for those Sins. (4.) By the *World to come* is not meant 'the intermediate time betwixt Death and the Resurrection, but that which is consequent

quent to the Resurrection ; and consequently this cannot be Purgatory. (5.) Remission of Sins in the World to come signifies a plenary Removal of Punishment, which is not only Death Eternal but Temporal. The true Meaning then of this Place is ; " If any one shall speak Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, he shall be punish'd both in this and the next Life."

Another Text they produce is, 1 Cor. 3. 10, 11, &c. 1 Cor. 3. According to the Grace of God which is given unto me, 10, 11, 12, as a wise Master-Builder, I have laid the Foundation, &c. ex- and another buildeth thereon. But let every Man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any Man build upon this Foundation, Gold, Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, Stubble ; every Man's Work shall be made manifest. For the Day shall declare it, because it shall be reveal'd by Fire ; and the Fire shall try every Man's Work of what sort it is. If any Man's Work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a Reward. If any Man's Work shall be burnt, he shall suffer Loss ; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by Fire. In this Place they tell us, that the Apostle speaks of the Fire, by which every Man's Work shall be try'd, whilst he himself shall be sav'd yet so as by Fire. Bellarmine tells us that this is one of the most difficult and useful Places of Scripture : since the Romanists establish upon it two Ecclesiastical Tenets, viz. Purgatory, and Venial Sins. And what a Wonder is it that two such Tenets should be founded on so difficult and obscure a Place of Scripture, especially since when we look more nicely into the Matter, we shall not find any thing to favour either Doctrine ? We shall at present only evince this with respect to Purgatory : (1.) The Apostle himself shews, that he does not mean Fire properly so call'd, when he says, that he himself should be sav'd, yet so as by Fire. (2.) He here treats of that Fire which shall try every Man's Work, whether it can be destroy'd by it, or is able to resist the Violence of it : but in Purgatory a Work is not try'd whether it be Good, but is punish'd because it is Evil. (3.) In this Place not only Hay and Stubble, i. e. Vain Doctrines,

or (as the *Romanists* will have it) Venial Sins; but likewise Gold, Silver, precious Stones, *i. e.* True and Salutory Doctrines, or Good Works, are tried: Therefore Men, even the most Holy Martyrs, shall be tried in this Fire, which is contrary to what the *Papists* hold concerning Purgatory. (4.) In this Fire not the Persons, but their Works are tried: But in Purgatory the Works are not tried, but the Persons punish'd. (5.) Here that Fire is meant, which shall manifest every Man's Work, and the Day is said to declare it; but no such thing can be done in Purgatory, where there is no Day. The true Meaning then, and Scope of this Passage is, "That there is no reason why we should esteem the Ministers of the Gospel for any other than the Ministers of God: and that those Teachers have no reason to exalt themselves above measure; because every Man's Work shall be tried; both Theirs who first preach'd the Gospel, and the Works of others, who built upon their Doctrine. For it might so happen, that these last, retaining the Foundation, might build upon it either true and excellent Doctrines, such as might render their Disciples firm and constant, and are compar'd to Gold, Silver and precious Stones: or vain and inefficacious Doctrines, compar'd to Wood, Hay and Stubble, which would render their Disciples unstable. That it was the Duty of both, seriously to attend to their own Work, because it shall be tried at a Day of God's Appointment, whether it be Good or Bad. That he, whose Work shall endure the Test, will be approv'd of and receive a Reward: But that he whose Work does not abide the Trial, shall suffer Loss, *i. e.* shall lose all the Advantage of his Work, and receive no Reward for it: But he himself shall be saved, because he has not departed from the Foundation; yet so as by Fire, *i. e.* he shall escape with as much difficulty, as a Person does out of a House that is in Flames about his Ears." And now what has all this to do with Purgatory?

Mat. 5.
25, 26. explain'd.

The last Text compar'd by them, which we shall mention, is Mat. 5. 25, 26. Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the Way with him, lest

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at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judg, and the Judg deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing. Here, say they, our Saviour speaks of a Prison from whence there should be a Deliverance after the Punishment, *i. e.* after the utmost Farthing was paid. He does not therefore mean Hell, from whence there is no Redemption; but Purgatory. *Answ.* We will not at present urge, that several of the *Romanists* and Fathers understand this Place of the Torments of Hell, but shall by plain Reasons shew that it makes nothing at all for Purgatory. (1.) It is not said, that there shall be any going out of this Prison; nor can it be infer'd from the word *Until*, since that is frequently used to denote a thing impossible, and which shall never come to pass. (2.) Our Saviour here speaks of a Man, who dies in mortal Sin without any Contrition, *viz.* one who has injured his Brother, and has not in the Way, *i. e.* in this Life, been reconciled unto him. (3.) Indulgences are inconsistent with the Payment of the utmost Farthing. The true Meaning then of the Place is this: Agree with thine Adversary, who has been injured by thee, and consequently has a Right of accusing thee: for else he will deal with thee as a Creditor with his Debtor; who not appeasing his Creditor by Promises of Payment, whilst he is in the way going to demand Justice of the Judg, will by the Judg be cast into Prison, and not be released till he has paid the whole Debt. By this Similitude taken from the Proceeding of a Creditor with his Debtor, our Saviour shews, what such an unjust Person was to expect: As if he should have said; After the same manner shalt thou be treated, unless thou reconcilest thy self with him whom thou hast injured: God will exact of thee the Punishment of all thy Sins, nor will he discharge thee till thou hast endur'd all, that is, Never.

Besides these Texts they make use of some Arguments, the chief of which we will consider, and it is

An Objection answered.

¹ Mat. 5. 18. John 14. 12. 2 Sam. 6. 23. Isa. 22. 14. Mat. 18. 34.

this. " Nothing unclean can enter into Heaven :
 " But the most Holy Persons sometimes fall into Sins,
 " and are frequently snatch'd out of the World be-
 " fore they have repented of them : Therefore 'tis
 " necessary that there should be some Place, in which
 " they may be purg'd from their Sins, before they
 " enter into Heaven." *Answ.* (1.) They who endea-
 vour to live holily, and seek after God sincerely, are
 esteem'd by him as pure, tho they may thro Surprise
 and Inadvertency sometimes fall into Sin. (2.) God
 pardons the Sins of the Penitent for the sake of Jesus
 Christ, and does not require us to make Satisfaction
 for them; nor can there be any other cleansing from
 Sin, than that which is wrought by the Blood of Jesus
 Christ.

S E C T. II.

Of the Resurrection of the Dead.

*The Resur-
 rection of
 the Dead.*

In treating of this Argument, which is the chief Ar-
 ticle of our Faith, and the Foundation of our whole
 Religion, we shall consider, First the Truth, Second-
 ly the Subject, Thirdly the efficient Cause, and Fourth-
 ly the Circumstances of it.

Without insisting upon the Notion of the *Saddu-
 cees*, who look'd upon the Resurrection of the Dead
 as impossible; and without standing to confute the
 Opinion of *Hymeneus*, *Philetus*, and others in the Pri-
 mitive Times, who held the Resurrection in a Spirit-
 ual Sense, as a Rising from the Death of Sin to a
 Life of Righteousness, and so maintain'd that the
 Resurrection was already past: Without, I say, in-
 sisting on these things, we affirm, That the true and
 proper Resurrection, which shall be at the last Day, is
 that by which God Almighty thro his Power will
 raise up Men, *i. e.* their Bodies, out of the Grave,
 and reunite them to their Souls.

The Truth of this Resurrection appears from mani-
 fest Arguments. In the Old Testament it was indeed
 more obscurely represented, but yet after such a manner,
 that God gave certain Tokens of his loving Men after
 Death,

Death, and of bestowing Benefits upon them. Thus he stil'd himself the God of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*, a long time after their Deaths; from whence our Saviour argu'd that they should rise again, since God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living. He likewise shew'd many Signs of his Power in bringing Men to Life again: For he kept *Jonas* three days in the Whale's Belly, and on the third Day deliver'd him out of it, as out of his Grave; *Elijah* rais'd the Widow of *Sarepta*'s Child to life again, as did *Elisha* of *Christ* the *Shunamite*'s Son; and a dead Man was reviv'd by being let down into *Elisha*'s Sepulchre, and touching his Bones. But the clearest Manifestation we have of the Truth of the Resurrection of the Dead, is under the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, who has destroy'd Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light by his Gospel. For (1.) it is confirm'd to us by the strongest and most unquestionable Testimonies and Promises, since the Promise of the Resurrection of the Dead is annex'd to the New Covenant, confirm'd by the Blood of *Christ* our Mediator as by a Seal; so that we ought to make no more question about that, than about the Necessity of our Obedience. (2.) It is most firmly prov'd by the Example of *Christ*, who after he had suffer'd a most cruel and bitter Death, was rais'd again by the Father on the third Day, and appear'd after his Resurrection to his Disciples, giving them infallible Signs that the same *Jesus*, who had been crucify'd, was risen again from the Dead. He therefore rising, as the first Fruits of the Resurrection, and as the Head of his Body the Church, sufficiently shews that the Members also shall one day rise. And hence it is that *St. Paul*, in the whole fifteenth Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, proves the Certainty of our Resurrection from this Topick, That *Christ is risen from the Dead*.

As for the Subject of the Resurrection, it is usually consider'd after a twofold manner in the Schools; and is call'd the Subject which, and the Subject by which, as they barbarously term it. But not to insist on this Scholastick Distinction, we say that the Subject of the Resurrection, are all Men who have liv'd in the World,

Shadow'd out to us under the Old, but more clearly confirm'd by the Promises and Example of Christ under the New Testament.

both Good and Bad. For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, to give an account of all our Works, whether they be good or bad; and consequently we must all be rais'd, except such as shall remain alive at the last Day, who shall be chang'd in a moment, and this Change to them shall be instead of Death and Resurrection. This is plain from all those Texts of Scripture wherein the Process of the Last Judgment is describ'd; so that one would wonder how it comes to pass that any should maintain that only the Good and Believers shall be rais'd; but that the Wicked shall remain for ever under the Power of Death, and be annihilated. But we shall not enter into a large Confutation of this Error, which some of the Maintainers of it [the *Socinians*] are now asham'd of. Let it suffice to observe that this Notion is repugnant to Scripture and Reason, and to the Justice of God, and is destructive of all true Piety and Vertue; since if the Wicked are not to rise again, what have they to fear in another World? And where is the Restraint that is now laid upon them by the Apprehensions of being one day call'd to a strict Account for all their Actions?

The Possibility of the Resurrection.

The only Difficulty we think fit to take notice of, and to solve, in this Matter, is this: "That it seems impossible for a Body reduc'd to Dust, devour'd by wild Beasts, burnt to Ashes, and suffering a thousand Transmutations into different Forms, to be restor'd and reunited to the Soul." *Answer.* This whole Difficulty may be solv'd by considering the Omnipotence of God, to which nothing is impossible. 'Tis easy for God out of the minutest Particle of Matter that remains, to restore the same Body. We see by the ordinary Course of Nature the same sort of Plant to spring from the smallest Seed; and shall we think it impossible for an Almighty God, who created the Heaven and the Earth out of Nothing, to rally all the scatter'd Atoms of our Bodies, tho they have pass'd through different Forms, and to reunite them again to our Souls? And is it more difficult to raise a Body when 'tis dead, than to create a Body out of Nothing? No surely, the same Power that could effect the one, can likewise do the other.

The

The efficient Cause of the Resurrection is God alone; but yet so as that it is attributed also to Christ: Not only upon the account of his Omnipotence, by which he will raise the Wicked to Punishment, and the Good to Life Eternal; but also upon the account of his Mediatorial Office, as the Captain and Author of the Salvation of the Faithful. Hence it is that our Saviour tells us that he will raise up the Believer in the last Day; and styles himself the Resurrection and the Life.

Its efficient Cause, God and Christ.

As to the Circumstances of the Resurrection, the Apostle tells us, that it shall be done in a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye; but yet so that some Order shall be observ'd between the Change of those that survive at the last Day, and the Resurrection of the Dead. For (says he in another Place) *we who are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God, and the Dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air.*

Its Circumstances.

Thus have we briefly stated the Doctrine of the Resurrection, avoiding all Nice and Subtle Questions about it, which are of no use either to the Enquirer or to the Answerer. For what signifies it to know whether we shall rise again with the same numerical Body or not; whether there be any distinction of Sexes in the other Life; whether our Bodies shall be larger in size at the Resurrection or not, with the like? What signify such uselefs and unprofitable Enquiries, when we may draw more obvious and advantageous Inferences from this Doctrine; viz. such as follow. (1.) Since our Bodies are to arise Glorious and Immortal, and to be united to our Souls for ever, we ought even here to present them to God as Instruments of Righteousness, as a living, holy and acceptable Sacrifice, that so we may be accounted worthy of a Blessed Resurrection. (2.) How ought we to suf-

Inferences drawn from the Doctrine of the Resurrection.

¹ John 6. ² Ib. ch. 11. 25. ³ Cor. 15. 52. ⁴ 1 Thess. 4. 15, 16, 17. ⁵ Rom. 8. 2. ⁶ 1 Cor. 15. 58. ⁷ 2 Cor. 15. 9, 10.

fer all the Adversities of this Life, even Death it self, with an Evenness of Mind, knowing that we shall be rais'd again to a more glorious State? (3.) It tends to render us Courageous and Constant in enduring Afflictions and the worst of Torments for the sake of Christ, knowing that those light Afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. For what signifies it if our Bodies be torn and devoured by wild Beasts, consum'd to Ashes, and those Ashes scatter'd upon the Deep, since we are certain that Death, and the Grave, and the Sea shall at the last Day deliver up their Dead? (4.) This Doctrine should teach us not to grieve overmuch for them who die in the Lord; but whilst we consider them as living with the Lord, and resting from their Labours, we should moderate our Grief, and endeavour after the same End, viz. the Salvation of our Souls.

S E C T. III.

Of the Last Judgment, and the End of the World.

*The last
Judgment.*

After the Resurrection of the Dead follows the Last Judgment, at which all Men shall appear to receive the just Recompence of their Works. In treating of the Last Judgment we shall consider, First, the Truth and Certainty; Secondly, the Constitution and Manner; and Thirdly, the Circumstances thereof.

*1. The
Truth of
it evinc'd
from Scrip-
ture.*

That God has appointed before the Creation of the World a certain Day for this Judgment, appears from *Mat. 25. 34, 41.* wherein a Kingdom is said to be prepar'd for the Righteous, and everlasting Fire for the Unrighteous, before the Foundation of the World. And this irrevocable Decree has God manifested at various times; First, more obscurely under the Old Testament by *Enoch*, and by the Prophets under the Law; but most clearly under the New Testament,

¹ 2 Cor. 4. 17. & 5. 1. ² Tim. 2. 11, 12. ³ Rev. 20. 13.
⁴ 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14, &c. ⁵ Jude v. 14, 15. ⁶ Hos. 13. 14.
Dan. 12. 1, 2. Mal. 3. 16. & 4. 5, 6.

where

where God is said to have appointed a Day wherein he will judg the World in Righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordain'd': And in *Mat. 25. 31, &c.* we have a lively Description of that Day, and the whole Process of the last Judgment presented to our View. Of this Article of Faith we make a solemn Profession in our Creed, when we declare that we believe in *Jesus Christ, who sits at the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence he shall come to judg the Quick and the Dead.*

But secondly, the same thing is prov'd from the Justice of God, and the Method of his Providence. For since God has declar'd himself to be a Lover of Justice, and a Hater of Iniquity, the Method of his just Government requires, that the Good should be happy, and the Bad miserable. But now in this Life we frequently see the Good to be afflicted, and expos'd to the Insults of their Enemies, whilst the Bad are in a flourishing Condition: And hence 'tis evident that there will be another Day, in which God will recompense every Man according to his Works, rewarding the Pious, and punishing the Ungodly. This Day is call'd the Day of Restitution of all things: For then the Judg of all the Earth will do right; then he will separate the Tares from the Wheat, make a notorious Discrimination between the Just and the Unjust, and assign to each their due Portion of Happiness or Misery.

Add to these in the third Place the Testimony of natural Conscience, which accuses, condemns and tortures the Wicked; not with the Fears of Human Punishment (since it accuses the most secret Sinner, and startles those that are in the highest Post) but with the Apprehensions of a sorer Punishment to be inflicted upon them by God. And since they frequently escape Punishment in this World, 'tis plain that Natural Conscience bears testimony to this Judgment, and

¹ Acts 17. 31. Mat. 12. 36, 37, 41, 42. & 13. 41, 42, 43, 49, 50. & Ch. 24. *throughout.* Luke 12. 36, 37, &c. Rom. 2. 4, 5, &c. & 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 2 Thess. 1. 16, 17, &c. Heb. 9. 27. 2 Pet. 2. 4. & 3. 10, 11, 12. Rev. 20. 12, 13, &c. ² Acts 3. 21.

whilst that is delay'd, passes a Judgment beforehand upon Men.

The Nature of the Judgment. For the due understanding the Constitution and Manner of this Judgment, we must consider distinctly, (1.) The Judg. (2.) The Persons to be judg'd. And (3.) The Form and Process of the Judgment.

The Judg is God and J. Christ. The Judg is God, the Supreme Lord of all; but more particularly our Saviour Jesus Christ, whom the Father hath appointed to be the King and Judg of all Men¹. So that this Act of Judging is a part of the Kingly Office, delegated to him by the Father, by which he will at last compleat the Office of a Redeemer, and introduce the Faithful, for whom he has purchas'd Salvation, into eternal Glory²: but will as a just Avenger, punish the Wicked and Obstinate³. He will to this purpose be furnish'd with all those Qualifications that are requisite. For (1.) he will be the Supreme Judg, from whose Determination no Appeal can be lodg'd, since he derives his Commission from God the Father. (2.) He will be Omniscient, before whom the most secret of our Thoughts shall lie open; so that he will not need (as earthly Judges do) to enquire nicely into the Matters of Fact, nor will he want the Information and Evidence of Witnesses, since he knows all things, nor can any Man pretend to deceive or corrupt this Judg. (3.) He will be Just; for he will judg without respect of Persons, Kings and Nobles standing upon the same level with the meanest Slave before his Tribunal⁴. (4.) He will be Omnipotent, arm'd with Power, by which he will be able to subdue all things to himself⁵: No man therefore can oppose his Judgment, or by force prevent the Execution of the Sentence that he shall pass. (5.) He will be Inexorable, so that none can by Tears work upon this Judg to recal his Sentence.

The Persons and Causes to be judg'd. As for the Persons to be judg'd, they are all Men, the Good and Bad, the Quick and the Dead, who shall be rais'd from their Graves, and be plac'd before the August Tribunal of Christ. The Causes which shall

¹ Mat. 28. 18. John 5. 22, 27. Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31.
² 1 Thess. 4. 16. 1 Cor. 15. ³ Luke 19. 27. ⁴ Rom. 2. 11.
⁵ Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 6. 15. Phil. 3. 21.

be tried, are all the Actions of Men whatsoever: Their external Deeds, their wicked and idle Words, their most secret Crimes and hidden Thoughts, nay, their Sins of Omission shall be all made manifest, and laid before the Judg.

The Form and Process of this Judgment comprehends these three things, a Cognizance of the Cause, a pronouncing of the Sentence, and the Execution thereof. *The Form and Process of this Judgment.*

A Cognizance or Knowledge of the Cause will not be necessary to an Omniscient Judg; nor indeed has it properly any thing to do, where the Sentence is already drawn up upon the Death of a Man, after which there is no room for Intercession. However, that the Equity of this Judgment might appear to us, it is commonly describ'd after the manner that is us'd in Human Judgments. Hence it is that mention is made of the Books being open'd, as if the Secrets of our Hearts were to be fetch'd out of these Books.

The pronouncing of the Sentence will consist in making a just Retribution, by which a sudden Division will be made of all Men into two Parties, the one to be sav'd, the other to be damn'd; and this according to the Works that every Man has done in the Body, whether they be Good or Bad.

The Execution of this Sentence will consist, in the bountiful bestowing of the Rewards assign'd on the Righteous, and in inflicting the severest Punishments allotted to the Wicked. This will be done without any Respite, and will immediately follow the pronouncing of the Sentence, or the Distribution of Mankind into two Parts; and then the notorious Discrimination between the Good and the Bad will be made.

The Circumstances of the last Judgment to be consider'd by us, are the Manner of Christ's coming to Judgment, the Place where, the Time when, and the Signs which are the Forerunners thereof. *3. The Circumstances*

As to the Manner of his coming to Judgment, it will doubtless be visible, as his Ascension into Heaven was; but so as that he shall appear in his own Glory, *Manner of Christ's coming to Judgment.*

¹ Revel. 20. 12. ² Acts 1. 11. ¹ Thessal. 4. 16. ³ Mar. 25. 31.

and

and in the Glory of his Father', maifest to all who shall stand before him.

*The Place
where.*

The Place is generally denoted by the Air and the Clouds of Heaven: Thus 'tis said, *Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him*¹: And again *We shall be caught up in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air*². Which is generally interpreted, as if the Lord Jesus sitting in the Air or in the Clouds of Heaven, as upon a Tribunal, should judg all that were summon'd before him by the Voice of the Archangel; and leaving the Wicked in Hell-fire, should take the Righteous along with him into the Air, and conduct them to the Glories of Heaven. Let this be as it will, 'tis plain that the particular Place of the Last Judgment is wholly unknown to us; and the Papists assigning it to be the Valley of *Jehoshaphat*, is a very ridiculous Fiction, and borrow'd from the *Jewish* Fable concerning their *Messiah*, who should kill *Gog* and *Magog* in that Valley, before the Walls of *Jerusalem*.

*The Time
when un-
certain.*

As for the Time of this Judgment, 'tis known to no Man. God has indeed in his secret Records prefix'd the very Day, but has thought fit to keep it concealed from us for wise and just Reasons: For being certain that such a Day will come, but uncertain when or how soon, this should keep us upon our guard, lest the Day should overtake us as a Thief in the night, at a time when we do not expect it.

*The Signs
forerunning*

The Signs which our Lord has been pleas'd to make the Forerunners of his Coming, are either (1.) General ones, such as a great Change in Human Affairs, and in the Government of God over them, describ'd at large by St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*¹. Or (2.) Particular Signs, such as that notable Apostacy by the Son of Perdition, spoken of by the Apostle²; The Conversion of the *Jews*, and calling in the Fulness of the *Gentiles*; The eclipsing of the Sun and Moon, and the falling of the Stars from Heaven; The Sign of the Son of Man appearing in the Clouds of Heaven; and the universal Conflagration of the World.

¹ Mat. 16. 27. ² Rev. 1. 7. ³ 1 Thess. 4. 17. ⁴ Mar. 24. Luke 21. ⁵ 2 Thess. 2. 1, &c.

The Uses we ought to make of the Doctrine of the Last Judgment are as follow. (1.) It serves to vindicate the Providence of God in his taking care of, and disposing the Affairs of Mankind; since tho the Good may be unprosperous, and the Wicked in a flourishing State here below, yet has he appointed a Day wherein he will set all things to rights, and reward every Man according to his Works. (2.) This should corroborate the Faithful in their hopes and expectation of the Divine Promises, and buoy up their Minds under the severest Afflictions, knowing that an eternal and durable Inheritance is reserv'd for them in the Heavens, and that here they are not to expect a full Retribution of their Piety. (3.) This should teach the Wicked not to be over-secure, tho all things here should succeed according to their Desires; but sincerely to repent of their past Sins, knowing that they must one day appear before Christ their Judge, to be judged by him whom they once despis'd. (4.) This should excite all Men to work out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling, knowing that they must give an account to Christ their Judge of all their Actions, Words and Thoughts. Hence St. Jerom pathetically cries out, *Quotiescumq; illius Diei recordor, omnia mea Membra contremiscunt, &c.* As often as I think on that Day, my very Joints tremble; whether I eat or drink, or whatever I do, methinks I have always this dreadful Sound in my Ears, **ARISE YE DEAD, AND COME TO JUDGMENT.**

S E C T. IV.

Of Eternal Life and Death.

When Mankind by the Last Judgment are distributed into two Parts, the State of the Righteous and the Wicked will be widely different; the One will be in the possession of the greatest Good, and the other consign'd over to the extremest Misery. This is evident from the joyful Sentence pronounc'd to the Righteous, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World;* and

and from that dreadful Sentence pass'd upon the Wicked, *Depart ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels.*

The Happiness of the Good.

As to the happy State of the Righteous, it is usually call'd Eternal Life; for the more distinct apprehending of which 'tis to be noted, that our Happiness will not be one single Enjoyment, but a Complication of many Blessings in order to make our State so perfect, that there shall nothing be wanting to compleat our Happiness. To this Perfection these things are requisite; (1.) That the Man should arrive at such a Perfection both of Body and Mind, as his Nature is capable of. (2.) That he should be freed from all Evil. (3.) That he should be in the possession of all those Goods that are necessary to the Completion of his Felicity. Of each of these very briefly. As to the Man himself, his Body will be Glorious, Immortal, Incorruptible¹, and made like to the Glorious Body of Christ². Hence it is said that we shall bear the Image of the last Adam, as we have born the Image of the first. The Soul will not be barely a living Soul, as it is here, but a quickening Spirit; *i. e.* such a Soul as will not stand in need of Food to communicate Life to it self and the Body, but which can by its intrinsick Power support it self. Again, he will be free from all Evil, having no inward Corruption to waste and destroy the Body, no Enemies any longer to oppose or struggle with, *for God shall wipe away all Tears from his Eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain: for the former things are pass'd away*³. Lastly, the Righteous shall be in the possession of all those Blessings, which are requisite to render their Happiness perfect and solid. Thus we are assured, *He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son*⁴. And again, *If we are Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*⁵. Now how will they be Heirs of God, unless they possess all things? Now the Blessings which tend to render a Man happy are these three, Good Company, a pleasant Habitation, and

¹ 1 Cor. 15. 2, 43, 44. ² Phil. 3. 21. ³ Rev. 21. 4. ⁴ Rev. 21. 7. ⁵ Rom. 8. 17.

Chap. 4: *Body of Divinity.*

in Affluence of all those Goods by which a glorified Soul and Body may conceive a solid Joy. And of all these will the Righteous be in possession in the other World: Their Company will be God himself, the Blessed *Jesus*, the holy Angels, and the Souls of just Men made perfect: Their Habitation will be the highest Heaven, call'd the Throne of God^s, and the Light to which no Man can approach: They will enjoy all manner of Good by the Beatifick Vision of God, the Supreme Good, and the Top of our Felicity. From these things will arise a true, solid and undisturbed Joy, wherein the Happiness of Man does properly consist; especially considering this Joy will be Eternal, such as we have no need to fear the losing of, or being cloy'd with.

But here a Dispute is usually rais'd concerning the *Degrees of Degrees of Glory*; viz. Whether in the next Life there be any difference of Glory among the Blessed, or whether their Glory be equal. We have formerly dis-claimed^{ed} the Opinion of the *Romanists* about the Merits of Good Works, and have prov'd that the Reward of the next Life is bestow'd gratuitously. However, since God is pleas'd to bestow an infinite Reward on a short, and in many points defective Obedience, thereby to testify his Love to Righteousness and Holiness; 'tis very suitable to such a Munificent, Bountiful and Holy Being, to bestow a more excellent Reward on a more eminent and laborious Obedience. This seems (1.) to be intimated by those Texts of Scripture wherein God is said to render to every Man according to the Works done in the Flesh^s; which may be explain'd so as to mean, in proportion to the Works done in the Body. (2.) The same may be infer'd from Places somewhat more particular. The Lord, upon his going a long Journey, committed an unequal Portion of Talents to his Servants, and upon his Return assign'd to each an unequal Reward, tho in proportion to the Work done by them: Thus he gave to one Ten, to another five Cities^s. To this may be added the Testimony of the Apostle, who says, *There is one Glory of*

¹ Heb. 12. 22, 23. ² 11. 66. 1. ³ 1 Tim. 6. 16. ⁴ Rom. 2. 6.
⁵ Cor. 5. 10. ⁶ Luke 19. 16, 17, &c. ⁷ 1 Cor. 15. 41, 42.
the

the Sun, and another Glory of the Moon, and another of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory. (3.) This Transcendency of Glory cannot at least be denied to those eminent Servants of God, the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, who are the Supporters and Pillars of the Church.

The Punishment of the Wicked, Eternal Death.

Contrary to Life Eternal is everlasting Death, the Punishment of the Damned, to which is annex'd the greatest sense of Pain. This consists (1.) in being forever depriv'd of the Glorious Presence and Beatific Vision of God: And (2.) in being shut up with the Company of Evil Spirits in a Place of exquisite Pain and Torment. But the greatest Sting of all is, that this Misery shall last to all Eternity: The Fire of Hell is unquenchable, and the Worm which gnaws on the Conscience of the Damn'd will never die. We avoid all nice Enquiries into the Nature of Hell-fire, nor shall we answer the Objections of those who oppose the Eternity thereof. Let it suffice to say, that this Method of punishing the Wicked is consistent with the Wisdom, and Justice, and Equity of God, who as the great Governour of the World knows best what Punishments are most proper to restrain Men from the Violation of his Laws.

BOOK

BOOK VII.

Of the CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

Of the Church of Jesus Christ in general.

HITHERTO in treating of the Divine Covenant we have considered the Faithful singly, and what the Duty of each of them is, in order to render them Partakers of the Benefits of God: It now remains that we should consider the Faithful as a Mystical Body collected under one Head the Lord Christ Jesus; and explain the Duty of the whole Body, as well as of the Members with respect to the Body.

This Mystical Body in Scripture is stiled the Church; in treating of which we will confine our selves to these two general Heads: First, we shall treat of the Church as it is a Mystical collective Body. Secondly, of the particular Members which constitute the Church. Under the former of these General Heads we shall consider these two Particulars: First the Ministrations of the Word, by which the Church is collected into one Body, propagated and preserved; and then the Church it self, with its various Divisions and Attributes. In the Ministrations of the Word we must consider, First, the Ministers of it; and Secondly, the Government, which ought to be in the

*The Sum
of this
Book con-
cerning the
Church.*

Church. Of these Points we shall treat briefly and distinctly, after premising somewhat in general concerning the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Chris-
tian
Church
defin'd.

Without amusing the Reader with the Etymology of the Greek Word *ἐκκλησία*, we say, That the Church of Jesus Christ is a Congregation or Society of Men called by the Preaching of the Gospel to Faith in Jesus Christ and to Holiness of Life, and who obey the Divine Call upon the Hopes of obtaining Eternal Happiness. It is a Congregation, because 'tis no where said of one Man that he is the Church, but 'tis always meant of many. However it is not requisite that there should be a great Number of the Faithful to constitute a Church, since two or three are sufficient¹; and thus mention is made of the Church in the House of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*², and in the House of *Philemon*³. It is a Society since they who are not of the same Congregation are of the Church, provided the Members of it be united together with the Spiritual Bond of Faith and Charity. I add, that it is a Society of Men, in opposition to some Divines, who pretend that Angels together with Men make up one Body or Church of Christ. But these Men may be easily confuted by this single Argument *viz.* That Christ has purchased his Church with his own Blood⁴, and has built it upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets⁵; which can by no means be applied to the State of Angels. 'Tis further added of Men called by the Preaching of the Gospel; thereby to shew that the Church is not constituted of all Men promiscuously, but of such as are called by the Gospel and obey that Call by believing in Christ, and doing those Good Works which are commanded by him.

¹ Mat. 18. 20. ² Rom. 16. 5. ³ Philem. ver. 2. ⁴ Act. 20. 28. Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. ⁵ Mat. 16. 18. Eph. 2. 20.

C H A P. II.

Of the Ministration of the Word, and the Ministers of it.

THE Means which God is pleas'd to use, in order to make us acquainted with his Will, are *Ministers* (1.) Reading of his Word; and (2.) The constant *Extraordinary or Ordinary* Preaching of it. These are the ordinary Means which have constantly prevail'd in the Church. But before the Church was gathered, and the Word committed to Writing, God was pleas'd to announce his Will by certain Persons commission'd by him to that purpose, and to commit it to Writing, that it might be faithfully preserv'd among Men. With respect therefore to this twofold State of the Church, we must distinguish between the Offices of the Persons employ'd either in gathering or propagating of it: For upon this account some were Extraordinary, others the Ordinary Ministers of the Gospel.

S E C T. I.

Of the Extraordinary Ministers of the New Testament.

The Extraordinary Ministers of the Gospel are *The Extra-* those whom our Saviour made use of for laying the *ordinary* Foundation of the Church, and whose Office was to *Ministers* cease when that was done. Who they were the *A-* of the Gos-
 pistle informs us, *Eph. 4. 11.* where he tells us, that *pel are,* our Saviour gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, &c. Of each of these we shall treat distinctly.

The chief of all the Extraordinary Ministers of *1. Apostles.* the Gospel were the Apostles. Now the word *Apostle* properly signifies a Messenger or Ambassador; which

was applied to the Twelve in the New Testament, who had constantly attended our Lord, were made Witnesses of his Resurrection, and sent out by him to preach the Gospel to all the World. To their Number St. Paul was afterwards added, being call'd by Christ himself, then reigning triumphantly in Heaven, to that Office; and hence it is that in the beginning of his Epistles he styles himself, *Paul call'd to be an Apostle*.

Their Privileges.

Many were the Prerogatives or Privileges of the Apostles, above all the Ministers God made use of under the Old or New Testament. As (1.) They were chosen and sent forth immediately by Christ himself; not by Dreams or Visions (as the Prophets of old) but by word of Mouth. (2.) They after Christ were the first Publishers of the Gospel, the most perfect of all Doctrines preach'd to Men in the Name of God, and wherein the Will of God was most fully reveal'd. (3.) They excel'd in the Gifts of the Holy Ghost all the Ambassadors of God, who either went before or came after them. (4.) They were led by the Spirit of God into all Truth; so that we may, nay ought without any fear of being deceived, to give the same Credit to their Preaching and Writings as to *Jesus Christ* himself. (5.) They had a Power of miraculously punishing those who rebel'd against the Gospel. True it is, such a Power was communicated to some Persons under the Law, as to *Moses*, *Elijah*, and *Elisha*. But the Power of the Apostles was extraordinary, in that they not only punish'd the Obstinate with sudden Death, and Blindness, but also delivered them up to Satan. (6.) Their Commission was of a larger Extent than that of *Moses* and the Prophets, they being sent into all the World and to all Nations, but the others only to one Nation and People. This Commission they faithfully discharged, and with so great an Efficacy of the Spirit, that many barbarous People, not at all prepar'd by their Education for the reception of the Gospel, but Strangers to God and the true Knowledge of him, under a prevalency of habi-

¹ Numb. 16. 49. ² 2 Kings 1. 11, 12. ³ 2 Kings 2. 24. & 5. 27. ⁴ Acts 5. 5, 10. ⁵ Acts 13. 11. ⁶ 1 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 20. ⁷ Mat. 28. 19. Mar. 16. 15.

ual Sins, polluted with gross Idolatry, and given up to their Lusts, were converted by them to Faith in Christ and Newness of Life; and many Churches were erected among them.

Next to the Apostles are reckoned the Prophets; of which kind were *Agabus*¹, *Judas* and *Silas*², *Barnabas*³, the four Daughters of *Philip* the Evangelist⁴, and several others in the Beginning and Infancy of Christianity⁵. The Term *Prophet* commonly denotes a Person who foretels future Events; but if we duly mind the Language of Scripture, a Prophet is any Person whatsoever who announces the secret things of God revealed to him, whether they be past, present or future. Thus *John* the Baptist foretold nothing, and yet is call'd the greatest among the Prophets⁶. A Prophet therefore properly speaking is the Messenger of God unto Men; to whose Office these two things are requisite, (1.) A particular Revelation from God; and (2.) A Command to publish this Revelation to others. That the Gift of Prophecy was much more eminent under the New, than under the Old Testament, appears throughout *St. Paul's* first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and his Epistle to the *Ephesians*: For therein we read of many who prophesied in the Primitive Church, and God poured out the Gifts of his Spirit on all manner of Persons without any distinction of Age or Sex, so that the Prophecy of *Joel*⁷ had (as *St. Peter* observes⁸) its full Completion at that time.

Among the Prophets of the New Testament the Apostles were the chief, to whom this Title was attributed in a more especial manner, and that upon the account of their forementioned Privileges and Prerogatives. Nay, they likewise foretold many things to come, and added to their Predictions many serious Admonitions, as appears in their Acts, and especially in their Epistles. But with respect to Prophecy there seems to have been this difference between the Apostles and the other Prophets; That to the Apostles, immediately after the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them

The Apostles were the chief Prophets.

¹ Acts 11. 27, 28. & 21. 10, 11. ² Acts 15. 32. ³ Acts 13. 1. ⁴ Ch. 21. 8, 9. ⁵ 1 Cor. 11. 4, 5. & 12. 28. & Ch. 14. ⁶ Luke 7. 28. ⁷ Joel 2. 28, 29. ⁸ Acts 2. 17, 18.

on the Day of *Pentecost*, all the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion were at once revealed, except (as 'tis probable) the Doctrin concerning the calling of the *Gentiles*; ſo that they had no need of any other Inſtructor, or a more immediate Revelation. Whereas the Prophets, as well as the reſt of the Faithful, were to attain the Knowledge of the Goſpel by the Information of the Apoſtles. When they were converted to the Faith, they were indeed honour'd with ſome Revelations by God, and endued with the knowledge of one or other particular Doctrin of Chriſtianity; and ſome of the moſt ſecret Myſteries were revealed to them, either that they might inſtruct others in ſome particular Caſes, or that they might be enabled to foretel things to come. And in this latter Caſe 'tis no abſurd thing to ſay, that ſometimes ſuch things were reveal'd to them, which were kept ſecret from the Apoſtles, of which we have an inſtance in *Agabus* and *Paul*, *Acts* 21. 11, 12.

Prophecy
an extraor-
dinary Gift.

That the Explication of the various Articles and Myſteries of Chriſtianity belong'd to the Office of a Prophet, is evident from what the Apoſtle ſays of it at large, *1 Cor.* 14. For that we are not to underſtand it of ſuch a Knowledge as is acquir'd by Study, as ſome imagine, but of ſome extraordinary Divine Gift, appears from hence; becauſe all the Gifts treated of in that Chapter, of which Prophecy is plac'd firſt, are extraordinary. Now 'tis not likely that the Apoſtle ſhould prefer a Knowledge acquir'd by Study before an extraordinary Gift of God. Nay, in the twelfth Chapter of this Epistle, Prophecy is plac'd among thoſe extraordinary Gifts which the Spirit worketh in the Faithful according to his good Pleaſure.

Another
Office of
the Pro-
phets.

'Tis likewiſe very probable that one part of the Office of the Prophets was, to interpret the Writings of the Old Teſtament, which ought to be explain'd by the ſame Spirit by which they were at firſt utter'd; elſe we could never have attained to the Myſtical Meaning of them.

3. Evan-
gelists.

Tho the Name of Evangelist be uſually and rightly attributed to the Four who wrote the Actions and Diſcourſes of our Saviour, yet in Holy Writ the Word is never taken in that ſenſe; but by Evan-
gelists

Christians as 'tis of the or In- ereas were infor- erted e Re- lg of and d to ome fore- ab- of re- e A- and and of a t at d it me ap- in are tie an th ose he

elists are understood the Assistants of the Apostles in preaching the Gospel, sent out by them to those Places whither they could not go themselves, to confirm the Churches which they had already establish'd. Of this Number were *Philip*¹, *Timothy*², *Titus*³; and of this Nature seem to have been the seventy Disciples⁴, as also *Clement*, *Softhenes*, *Silas*, and others mentioned in several Places of the Acts, and in the Epistles. These were endued with extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as the Gift of Prophecy, the Gift of Tongues, &c. So that they seem not to have been inferior, but in some things superior to the Prophets.

As to Teachers and Pastors, 'tis made a question whether their Office be ordinary or extraordinary. 'Tis commonly believ'd to be ordinary, because the Office of teaching and governing the Church belongs to the ordinary Rulers of the Church. As for our parts, we believe their Office to be extraordinary; which will be evident, if we consider more attentively the Language of Holy Writ; viz. that those whom we now call Teachers and Pastors, were formerly still'd Bishops and Presbyters. For wherever in Scripture any mention is made of the ordinary Governours of the Church, they are only call'd Bishops and Presbyters, to whom were added Deacons. These the Apostles are said to have plac'd over several Churches; to them are their Epistles directed, and to them they prescribed Rules, according to which the Officers of the Church were constantly to be chosen.

4. Teachers and Pastors were likewise extraordinary Ministers.

S E C T. II.

Of the Ordinary Ministers of the Gospel.

The ordinary Ministers are such as are to remain in the Church successively to the End of the World; between whom and the extraordinary Ministers there is a great deal of difference. Now what we have to say

Ordinary Ministers ordain'd in the Church.

¹ Act. 21. 8. ² 2 Tim. 4. 5. ³ Tit. 1. 5. ⁴ Luke 10. 1.

concerning them may be reduc'd to these five Heads. First, whether any such ordinary Ministers were appointed in the Christian Church, by Christ or his Apostles. Secondly, who they are, and what distinction there is betwixt them. Thirdly, what Mission is requisite for the due performance of their Office, and how they ought to be chosen. Fourthly, what Qualifications are requisite in them, in order to their being duly elected to that Office. And Fifthly, wherein their Office consists.

As to the first of these Heads, it may seem superfluous to say any thing about it, since there are such manifest Indications in holy Writ of the Appointment of such an ordinary Ministry, that there is no occasion to question the Truth of it. However, since there are some Christians, who rejecting the Ministry, maintain that Propheying in the Church ought to be promiscuous, and that every Man should have the Liberty of holding forth publicly, and of discouraging of all manner of Doctrines, it may not be amiss to take this Opinion into closer Examination, and thereby to establish the Perpetuity of the publick Ministrations.

*Proved by
several Ar-
guments.*

The Appointment and Perpetuity of the ordinary Ministry we prove by the following Arguments. (1.) Because the Apostles all along did constitute such ordinary Ministers over each Church. Thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* are expressly said to have ordain'd Elders or Presbyters in every Church¹; and the Apostle commands *Titus* to ordain Elders in every City of *Crete*². (2.) They are said to be ordain'd by God to feed and watch over the Flock of Christ³, viz. the Church. (3.) The Apostles prescribed Rules to be observ'd in the making choice of such Ministers for the future⁴; which Rules would have been insignificant, if the Office of Bishops and Presbyters, as well as that of the Apostles and Prophets, was shortly to cease in the Church. Wherefore we no where find any Rules by which the Apostles or Prophets were to be elected in the Church, because their Mission was divine, and their Office extraordinary. (4.) Add to these, the

¹ Acts 14. 23. ² Tit. 1. 5. ³ Acts 20. 28. ⁴ 1 Tim. 3. 1, &c. Tit. 1. 5, 6, &c.

great Usefulness of such a Ministry, and the necessity of it, in order to the well-instructing and governing the Church. (5.) And lastly, 'tis recommended by the universal and constant Practice of the Church, from the Apostles down to our own times; for though there have been Disputes about the Degrees and Authority of Ministers, yet there is scarce any one but what owns the Function to be perpetual in the Church.

As to those promiscuous Prophefying, or expounding of the Holy Scripture, which some at present contend for, and that with so violent a Zeal, as to charge all those who will not admit of them, but are for a regular Ministry, with being Usurpers of an Authority that does not belong to them alone; it cannot (we say) be prov'd by any solid Argument, that such Prophefying is necessary in the Church. True it is, they were in use in the Jewish Synagogues; but then there was no such Confusion in those alternate Discourses practis'd among them, as is to be observ'd among those of our times, who would all set up for Speakers without any distinction of Persons. Nor does the Apostle (as they pretend) 1 Cor. 14. favour such a Practice, since he there only speaks of such a Prophefying as was an extraordinary Gift of the Holy Ghost; and to avoid Confusion, he restrains the Number of those that prophesy to two or three, who should speak by turns, and neither of them to begin till the other had held his peace.

But not to insist on the many Inconveniences which may attend such promiscuous Prophefying, where even the most illiterate are allowed to vent their own confused Notions in the most abstruse points of Divinity, and that in the Face of some Hundreds or Thousands in a Congregation: We will only consider and reply to what the Men of that way have to say for themselves.

In the first place they object, That the ordinary Ministry, by which one Man assumes to himself the Power of preaching in a Congregation, in exclusion of all others, is inconsistent with the Liberty which belongs by Nature to all Men. For say they, since all Men by Nature are upon the same Level, no Man has more Authority than another of speaking publicly in the

Promiscuous Prophefying, no where prescribed.

Objections answered.

the Congregation; they therefore who assume it to themselves are Magisterial, and stint the Spirit. *Ans.* 'Tis true indeed that no Man by Nature has more right than another of speaking publickly in a Congregation. But then 'tis no less true, that all Men may not without distinction make use of that Privilege; since the Edification of the Church, and Decency or good Order require, that the Power which belongs to all by Nature should be transferred by the whole Church on some few Persons, who by their Studies have render'd themselves capable of edifying the People by their preaching. Not that by this transferring of Right a certain Divine or Prophetical Authority is conveyed to them, which belongs not to others; but that in the common Office of the Church prescribed by God to every individual Person, (*viz.* that every Man should instruct his Neighbour) such Persons should administer it in the Name of the Church for the avoiding of all Confusion, who are most capable of doing it to Edification. Now such cannot be said to assume to themselves a Magisterial Authority, or to stint the Spirit; since they do not pretend to any immediate Mission from God, nor to any Authority of prescribing Articles of Faith, or of dictating their own Sentiments to others, but only observe the Order which God himself has appointed in the Ministration of his Word.

Heb. 10.
24, 25.
explained.

In the second place they urge the Words of the Apostle, Heb. 10. 24, 25. *Let us consider one another, to provoke unto Love, and good Works: Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, &c.* From these Words they deduce several Arguments, but the chief of them, which we think deserves an Answer, is this, that the Apostle commands us to exhort one another. *Ans.* (1.) The word *ἀλλήλους*, *one another*, is not in the Original Greek, but only the word *ἐκαλλήλους*, *exhorting*. But (2.) supposing it to be understood, yet there is not the least Indication in the Text, that it should be meant of the whole Congregation of the Church. It may denote lesser Societies, wherein Christians stirred up one another to Love and good Works, and which the Apostle would not have the Members to forsake. But (3.) Taking it for granted, that here

is

understood the entire Congregations of a whole Church, the Words may be so taken, as that Men should exhort one another not to forsake the publick Congregations: for they may consider and provoke one another to Love and good Works, tho they are not all Speakers in the publick Assemblies, *i. e.* they may by Example and Admonitions privately exhort one another. And this we take to be the true meaning of the Place.

Thirdly, their next and last Argument is taken from some Texts, wherein the Faithful are admonished to warn one another. *Ans.* Nothing can be infer'd from those Places but this, that 'tis the Duty of all Christians to teach and admonish one another; but as to the time and place of this Admonition, there is not the least mention. Every Man therefore may discharge his Duty in this matter, when he does it privately and at proper Seasons, tho he does not intrude upon the Ministerial Office by doing it publicly.

S E C T. III.

Of Bishops and Presbyters, and their Mission.

The second General to be consider'd, is, who these *The Ordinary* Ministers are, and by what Names called in *Scripture*. Now there are three Orders of them mentioned, *viz.* Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons; of the two former of which, we shall treat in the first place.

The Names of Bishops and Presbyters are sometimes to be met with in Holy Writ, and are frequently made use of in the Writings of the Fathers, and are at present Titles of universal Usage in the Church of Rome: But among the Reformed, especially in Germany, the Low-Countries and France, the Names of Teachers, Pastors and Preachers have generally pre-

¹ Rom. 15. 14. Gal. 6. 1. Eph. 5. 18. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 14. Coloff. 3. 16. 1 Theff. 4. 18. & 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Heb. 3. 13. Jude ver. 4.

vail'd; the Change of the Name being made for a weighty Reason. For since the Reformation began in those Parts without the Authority of the Magistrate; the Governors of the Church would not take upon them the Title of Bishop, which was the Mark of a secular Dignity, lest they should seem to usurp the Rights and Dignities of another; and therefore they chose rather to be call'd Teachers, Preachers, &c. But in *England*, where the Reformation was carry'd on, and effected by the Authority of the King, the Name as well as Dignity of Bishop is still retain'd.

What is
meant by
these
Words.

The word *Ἐπίσκοπος*, Bishop, does properly signify an Overseer and Visiter; their Duty is stil'd *Ἐπισκοπία*, Overseeing or Visiting; which is likewise attributed to the Apostles themselves. *Πρεσβύτερος*, Presbyter, properly signifies an Elder, because then hardly any but Men advanc'd in Years were chosen to that Office. And this Title is likewise ascribed to the Apostles.

Whether
the Office
of a Bishop
be greater
than that
of a Pres-
byter.

But that we may treat the more distinctly concerning these, we must in the first place consider a Question that is at present controverted by Men of great Parts, concerning the difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter. The Question is this; Whether the Office of a Bishop be greater than that of a Presbyter, so that a Bishop should preside over the Church by such a special Authority as is incompatible with the College of Presbyters? *Ans.* After the times of the Apostles, *Eusebius* and other Ecclesiastical Writers inform us, that there was a Bishop plac'd over every Church, and they give us the Catalogue of the Bishops who succeeded one another in the principal Churches; from whence it may be infer'd, that a Bishop was not reckon'd by those Writers to be the same with a Presbyter, but understood to be one who was President over the whole College of Presbyters, and in process of time those Bishops obtain'd a Jurisdiction, over the Presbyters.

Arguments
for the Ne-
gative O-
pinion.

But 'tis made a question whether the Scripture acknowledges such a distinction between a Bishop and a Presbyter. The Opinion of many Protestants, especially of the Reformed Churches beyond Sea, is

1 Tim. 3. 1. Acts 1. 20. 1 Pet. 5. 1.

that

ap. 2.

at the Scripture makes no distinction betwixt Bishops and Presbyters, since these Terms are equivalent and are often us'd one for the other. St. *Jerom* among the Antients was a Favourer of this Opinion. For the proof of the promiscuous Use of these Terms, they produce the following Arguments. (1.) Because *Paul*, commanding *Titus* to ordain Elders in every City, and in declaring afterwards what sort of Presbyters he would have ordain'd, gives us the Character of a Bishop'. (2.) They argue from *Acts* 20. 17. where the Apostle when he was come to *Miletus*, is said to have sent to *Ephesus*, and to have call'd the Presbyters of that Church to him; and *ver.* 28. admonishes them of their Duty; *Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, &c.* (3.) St. *Peter*, say they, speaking to the Elders, calls himself an Elder, and admonishes them to feed the Flock of God *ἐπισκοπῆτες*, taking the Oversight thereof without Constraint'. (4.) The Apostle, *Phil.* 1. 1. addresses his Epistle to all the Saints who are in *Philippi*, both Bishops and Deacons; from whence, say they, the Apostle must needs comprehend the Presbyters under the Name of Bishops, because in those Churches, where that distinction of Dignity has prevail'd, no more than one Bishop is President over one Church.

But to these Arguments the Asserters of Episcopacy very well reply, that these Terms are not equivalent, since the Title of a Bishop is never attributed to Presbyter, but that a Bishop may be call'd by both those Names. So that the word *ἐπίσκοπος* always denotes a particular Bishop, whereas the Word *Πρεσβύτερος* is sometimes applied to Bishops, sometimes to Presbyters. As to the Texts produced on the other side, they say, *Acts* 20. St. *Paul* not only conven'd the Governors of the Church of *Ephesus*, but likewise of all the other Churches round about, over each of which a Bishop presided; and that therefore the Apostle might well stile them Bishops, because there were many of them. This they infer from hence, *viz.*

Answered
by others.

' Tit. 1. 6—9. ' 1 Pet. 5. 2.

because

because the Church of *Ephesus* alone cannot be call'd *ἡ ἐκκλησία*, the whole Flock over which the Bishops were Overseers; as also because the Apostles liv'd not only at *Ephesus*, but spent the Space of three Years in all *Asia*. The same Answer they give *Phil. 1. 1.* namely, that under *Philippi*, the Metropolis of *Macedonia*, many Cities were comprehended, each of which had their particular Bishop. Much the same Answer they give to what is urg'd from the other places, viz. *Tit. 1.* and *1 Pet. 5.*

What ought
for the
sake of
Peace to
be maintain'd.

As for my part I will freely acknowledg, that Bishops were by the Apostles set over the Churches, who in some degree were superior to Presbyters, and consequently presided over the College of Presbyters. But then I say, that the Apostles by this Institution did not intend to prescribe such a perpetual and immutable Form of Church-Government, as that it should be unlawful in any time or case to recede from it: but because 'tis a matter of outward Order and Decency, they left the Churches at liberty of altering it for the publick Benefit, whenever they thought it necessary; that is, they were minded that the Churches by the constant Exhortations of their ordinary Ministers should be excited to Piety, and a Progress in the Faith: but then they left the Churches at full Liberty to place over themselves what sort of Bishops they pleased, and with as great an Authority as they thought fit, provided the Glory of God and the Edification of the whole Church was their principal Aim. Therefore my Opinion is, that 'tis the Duty of every Man to rest satisfied in that Form of Church-Government which is by common Consent received in the Church wherein he lives, and never to raise Commotions, or rend the Church into Schism upon the account of external Order, provided it does not degenerate into Tyranny, nor lay any force upon Mens Consciences, or destroy the Christian Liberty. If any one therefore lives under an Episcopal Government, let him attempt nothing against it; and on the other hand, if he lives under a Presbyterian Form, let him not endeavour to introduce Bishops, as if they were absolutely necessary for the well-being of the Church.

As to Presbyters 'tis likewise ask'd, whether there be not two sorts of them, some Preachers, and others Governors, as is at present the Practice of some Reformed Churches. *Ans.* I make no question but that this Order is very suitable to the State of some Churches, and therefore may with Benefit be observ'd in those Churches, especially if there be care taken that the Presbyters who are chosen be grave and expert, and Men well vers'd in the Knowledge of the Scriptures. For (as we said before) the Apostles seem not to have prescrib'd any Form of Government to the Churches, which was at no Time, and in no Case to be changed. In such Cases therefore the Church seems to have a right of ordering what may appear best, and most conducive to its Welfare. But there is no solid Proof that this Order was instituted by the Apostles, or was of use in their times, as some Protestants pretend.

But not to enlarge any farther on this point, there is another Question of greater moment and use still behind, *viz.* What Mission or Call is requir'd, in order to render the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel, whether Bishops, Presbyters or Preachers (call them by what Name you please) capable of discharging their Duty lawfully. This Question is moved by the *Romanists* against those of the Reformed Religion, that thereby they might have occasion of condemning the whole Work of the Reformation as unlawful. They therefore require that every one who shall be admitted into any Ministerial Office of the Church, should have a lawful Mission or Call thereto, which no Man (say they) can have, unless he derives it from the Pope or his Vicars.

Of the Mission or Call of Ministers.

It is indeed to be own'd, that in Congregations already form'd and constituted, 'tis necessary some lawful Choice should be made of Persons to preside over and instruct the Church, whether by the Imposition of Hands, or any other way. But then this is not essential to the Ecclesiastical Office, but is requir'd only for Order and Decency's sake, of which God is the Author. This Ordination is usually perform'd, either by the Bishop, or by a Presbyter, according to the different Forms of Church-Government received in

What Mission required in a Church already formed.

dis-

different Churches. For since the whole Church cannot of it self take care of all things, and in so great a Multitude one may justly fear some Confusion will happen; hence it is that it appoints some Persons, who in its Name should perform all such things as relate to the Church in common.

For the Legal Mission therefore of a Minister, 'tis sufficient that a Congregation of Believers should constitute one of their own Number, according to the Apostolical Order, to be their Minister; and confer upon him the Power of Teaching and Preaching publicly, and of doing all things in their Name which shall tend to the Decency of the Church, and the Edification of the Hearers. This Mission is necessary, that a Regularity may be observ'd, without which no Society can subsist.

The Divine Mission not necessary, unless in the announcing of a new Doctrine.

Hence it appears, how unjustly the Papists quarrel with the Protestants about their Ministerial Mission. For since the first Reformers were not sent forth by the Pope or his Substitutes, they require that their Mission should be immediately from God; but without the least colour of Reason. For an immediate Divine Mission is only necessary in such a case, where in some new and unheard of Doctrine is to be publish'd in the Name of God, as was the Apostles Case. But the Reformers have not preach'd any new Doctrine, but have restor'd from several Corruptions and Errors a Doctrine that was formerly preach'd, and sufficiently ratified and confirm'd by many Miracles and Wonders. For the effecting of this there was no occasion of an immediate Mission from God, but only of the Scripture, the infallible Word of God, the only and perfect Rule of our Faith.

Objections answered. Rom. 10. 15. explained.

This being observ'd, it will be an easy matter to reply to all the Objections of the *Romanists*. In the first place they urge the Words of the Apostle, *Rom. 10. 15. How shall they preach, unless they are sent?* *Ans.* Whoever consults this place will find that the Apostle's meaning is not that 'tis unlawful for any to preach, unless he be sent; but that no Man can preach without a Mission. He treats of the Promulgation of a new Doctrine, the Revelation of which could, and ought only to be had from God alone.

Secondly

Secondly, they urge the Words of our Saviour, John 10. 1. *He that entreth not by the Door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is Thief and a Robber.* Now to enter in by the Door (say they) is to enter by a lawful Way and Authority, therefore the not entring in by the Door is illegal. *Ans.* Christ calls himself the Door; therefore to enter in by the Door, is to enter in by Christ: For our Saviour doth not here speak of the Mission of Pastors, but of their Office, which requires that they should take care of their Flock, and provide for their Welfare, without proposing any secular Advantage to themselves.

Lastly, to mention no more, they urge the Words of the Apostle, *Heb. 5. 4. No man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* *Ans.* In this place the Apostle treats of that Priesthood, by means of which great Benefits were bestow'd by God upon Men, *viz.* Remission of Sins: And truly this Honour no Man could assume to himself, it belonging to God alone to dispense his Favours how, and by what Person he pleases. Upon the whole matter we conclude, that if any Person be endued with such Gifts, as can render him capable of instructing others, and be chosen by the Church for a Teacher, such an one is lawfully sent, and needs no other Call.

There are two sorts of Election to the Ministry to be met with in Scripture; one by the whole Church, as was the joining of *Matthias* to the Eleven, by casting of Lots; and the other by the Appointment of the Governours of the Church: And thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* ordained Bishops; and *Titus* was commanded by *Paul* to ordain Elders in every Church. But let the Election of a Minister be by a Bishop, or by the Presbytery, or by the whole Church, in the Election they ought to have regard to the Glory of God, and the Edification of his Church. So that without any Human Consideration an eye ought to be had to the Qualifications mentioned by the Apostle, *1 Tim. 3. Tit. 1.* Nor ought any to be advanc'd to

1 Acts 1. 15, &c.

2 Acts 14. 22.

M m m

that

that Office, till after a nice and diligent Examination according to the Apostolical Rules.

The Qualifications of a Bishop with respect both to his Doctrine and Manners.

There are several Qualifications required in a Bishop mentioned in the Text above-nam'd, some relating to Doctrine, others to his Life and Manners. As to Doctrine, 'tis requir'd that he be διδακτικός, apt to Teach; i. e. one who being well acquainted with the Word of God, is able to explain the sound Meaning of it unto others, and to confirm them in the saving Truths; and that he be able withal to resist the Gain-sayers, and to vindicate the Truth of God from the Cavils and Objections of others. The Qualification respecting the Life and Manners of a Bishop, requires two things; First, that he be free from those Vices which may render that Function contemptible; Secondly, that he be adorn'd with all those Vertues that are necessary for the discharging of his Office with Profit and Edification.

Of the first sort are these Endowments, (1.) That he be unblamable, against whom no Crime can be justly objected, whereby to cast any Blemish on his Function. (2.) That he be not given to Wine, since such a Habit is inconsistent with the Vigilance and Care that is required in a Bishop, and is destructive of his Authority. (3.) That he be not self-will'd, too much adhering to his own Sentiments, which is a Fault hateful to all Men, and renders the Person guilty of such a magisterial Air, which no Man can excuse. (4.) That he be not addicted to Anger and Passion, which will keep him from discerning the Truth, and from teaching it to others with any advantage. (5.) That he be free from Avarice, and not greedy of filthy Lucre; that is, that he do not sell Sacred things to sale, nor aspire to the Office of a Bishop for the sake of Gain. (6.) That he be no Novice; and the Reason added is, *lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.*

The second sort of Qualifications are the Vertues which a Bishop is required to be endued with; and they

¹ 1 Tim. 3. 2. ² Ibid. & Tit. 1. 6, 7. ³ 1 Tim. 3. 3. ⁴ 1 Tim. 3. 3. ⁵ Tit. 1. 7. ⁶ 1 Tim. 3. 6.

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Chap. 2. *Body of Divinity.*

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as follow. (1.) Piety; *i. e.* that he shew himself both by Words and Deeds to bear an awful Reverence to God, and to have a due regard to Religion. (2.) That he be just and equitable; not only give every Man his due, but behave himself towards others gently, affably, and with the highest Moderation. (3.) That he be a lover of Hospitality and of good Men. (4.) That he be sober, addicted neither to Gluttony, nor to Excess. (5.) That he be chaste and continent: And (6.) the Husband of one Wife.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Office of Bishops and Presbyters.

The last thing to be considered is the Office of Bishops and Presbyters, or Governours of the Church; which comprehends these two things, Teaching, and governing the Church.

But that a Man may duly discharge this Office, 'tis above all things necessary that he rightly qualify himself for it. To this purpose 'tis requisite, that he thoroughly consider the Nature and Weight of the Office with which he is intrusted; *viz.* that he is the Minister of God, to announce his Will to Men; and that his Office therefore is, (1.) To be fully convinc'd himself of the Will of God, and hold fast a Form of sound Words, a certain Body of Doctrine wholly conformable to the Divine Will: To which end he should be constant in reading of the Scriptures, from whence alone the Doctrine of Salvation can be deduc'd. (2.) That he do not through the Fear of Man refrain from teaching any thing which God has commanded to be taught. (3.) That he prescribe nothing to the Church as necessary, besides what God has declared to be so; nor invent any new Articles of Faith not to be met with in Scripture, to be impos'd upon Men. (4.) That he have only an eye upon the Glory of God, and the Salvation of those who are committed to his Charge, without any base By-ends of his own to

Tit. 1. 8. Ibid. Ibid.

serve. (5.) And lastly, that he be free from all ambitious Aims, which frequently carry a Man away either to be obstinate, or to hate those who dissent from him.

*Teaching
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their Of-
fice.*

*What
things are
to be
taught.*

Teaching, which we said was one part of the Minister's Office, consists partly in asserting the Truth, and partly in regulating the Manners; for the due discharge of which, Knowledge and Prudence are requisite.

To Knowledge belong all those things which a Minister ought to teach, *viz.* such as tend to promote Faith and Edification. Therefore (1.) the saving Truth ought to be preach'd, without the knowledge of which there can be no Faith; and 'tis to be vindicated from all Objections, and maintain'd by sound Arguments against Gainstayers, that so their Hearers may be able to give an account of the Hope which is in them, and may have their Senses exercis'd to discern between Good and Evil. (2.) Not only such a Truth is to be preach'd which is absolutely fundamental, but likewise that which is very useful, either for the farther Confirmation of the saving Truth, or for the greater promoting of all Christian Vertues. (3.) This Truth ought to be applied to the Edification of the Hearers, either by way of Reproof, Exhortation or Consolation. But on the other side, since he is the Minister of God, he ought to commit nothing which may transgress his Bounds; nor should he assume to himself any Dominion over Mens Souls in this matter: For since God in the Scriptures has fully and clearly reveal'd to us all Truths necessary to Salvation, either in express Words, or in such as by natural consequence infer as much; nothing ought to be added thereto, or impos'd upon others, as necessary to be believ'd and observ'd.

*Who the
Persons are
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be blamed
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They therefore are mightily to blame, *viz.* (1.) Such as add to the Word of God unwritten Traditions, as Rules of Faith and Manners necessary to be observ'd. (2.) Those who maintain such Articles and Doctrines to be necessary and fundamental, which are not clearly determin'd in Scripture, and about the Truth of which Learned Men are divided in their Opinions. (3.) Those who either invent themselves, or follow of

thers in their Inventions of new Phrases and Forms of Expression not used in Scripture, and obtrude them upon others as necessary. For tho every one is at his liberty to express his Mind by what Phrase he pleaseth, yet has he no Right of dictating them to others. They therefore who offend in these Points may be justly stil'd false Teachers, in pretending to advance things contrary, or to super-add any thing to the Scriptures. Whereas on the contrary, they are the true Teachers, who press nothing as necessary to be believed and practis'd, but what the Apostles have taught us to be so, and who add nothing of their own, but what is deducible from Holy Writ.

As for the Prudence requir'd of Ministers in teaching others, it is compris'd under the following Particulars. First, care ought to be taken that their Hearers may be endued with the Knowledge of the saving Truth; but especially that their Manners may be regulated, because Knowledge without Piety is unprofitable, nay prejudicial, and the cause of greater Condemnation. Secondly, they ought to insist more upon establishing the Truth, than in refuting of Errors, that it may appear that their Doctrine is a Doctrine of Peace and Charity, not exciting their Hearers to mutual Conteſts and Quarrels, but to Amendment of Life and brotherly Love. Thirdly, great Regard ought to be had to the Circumstances of Place, Time and Persons; since all things are not convenient at all Times and in all Places, but the method and way of Teaching ought to be varied according to the difference of Circumstances. What is fit to be preached at one time, may not be so proper at another; and what may be deliver'd to Persons of sound Judgment, ought not to be publickly taught in a mix'd Congregation of illiterate as well as of learned Men. Fourthly, In conversing with their Adversaries they ought to be cautious with whom they converse; for those Men are to be shunned, whose Lives and Manners are such, as that we may justly fear all our Labour will be ill bestow'd upon them; Of which nature are the openly Profane, the Obstinate, and the Contentious. Fifthly, In Times of Persecution a Teacher must not rashly trust himself to every body, according to the Advice given by our Sa-

Prudence in Teaching, what it contains.

viour to his Apostles, *Be wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves; but beware of Men, &c.* Sixthly and lastly, No small part of a Minister's Duty consists in comforting the Afflicted, especially the Sick. For here a Minister ought to sute himself to the various Circumstances of his spiritual Patients, and apply his Counsels according to the different Tempers and Lives of the Persons whom he visits, if he expects or desires to do them any real Good. 'Tis likewise a part of Prudence to set himself cheerfully and heartily to the discharge of his Duty. To this purpose he must as far as possible disengage himself from all those things which may hinder him in the performing of his Office, and never be embarras'd with the perplexing Cares of this World, or how to enrich or aggrandize his Family. He must therefore be content with his Portion of what sort soever, provided it be but a Competency; and never by hunting after Preferments give the World occasion to say, that he is more intent in making provision for his Family, than in taking care of his Flock:

*Governing
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fice.*

The Government of the Church is another part of their Office, which consists in taking particular care of the Church, that their Manners be regulated according to the Doctrine faithfully propos'd by them, and that all things be done in the Church orderly, and to the Edification of all. To this end these things are requisite: First, That the Governours of the Church set a good Example to others, and this, not only in their publick preachings, but also in their private Conversations; avoiding all Levity of Discourse and Behaviour on the one hand, and all Sourness, Moroseness, Affectation and Superciliousness on the other. Secondly, They should diligently attend to the Manners of their Auditors, and inspect their Lives, and be often (as occasion requires) exhorting, admonishing and reproving them, not only in publick, but chiefly in private, where their Exhortations, Admonitions and Reproofs are most likely to have the greatest effect upon the Minds of their People, especially if duly tim'd and wisely manag'd: That they assume not to themselves a Dominion over the Church, since the Faithful are the Lord's Inheritance, and not Vassals to their Priests.

S E C T.

S E C T. V.

Of Deacons.

The Greek Word *διακονος* signifies in general a Minister; but when it refers to the Church, it has a twofold Meaning. For first the Word *διακονια* in the Abstract signifies any spiritual Ministration; but in a stricter sense 'tis taken for those to whom providing for the Poor, and taking care of the Church-Treasury is committed. Of these there were two Orders in the Primitive Church, one of Men, another of Women, called Deaconesses.

What is meant by the Word Deacon.

As to Deacons there are two things to be consider'd, *viz.* their Election, and their Office. In their Election two things likewise occur, (1.) Who and what sort of Persons were to be elected; and (2.) by what Method, and under what Caution. The Apostle, 1 Tim. 3. 8. tells us what kind of Persons are to be chosen; where two Qualifications not mention'd before in the Character of a Bishop are required, Gravity, and holding the Mystery of Faith in a good Conscience. The Vices from which he would have them free, are the same with those from which a Bishop should abstain; but he adds, that they should not be double-tongu'd, that is, not say this and that of one and the same thing. As to the Caution under which they ought to be elected, the Apostle in the same Chapter, Ver. 10. tells us, *Let them first be proved, then let them use the Office of a Deacon, being found blameless.* This Probation or Trial may be said to have relation, both to their whole Lives, that they be found blameless; and particularly to the Faithfulness requir'd in the discharge of their Office.

The Election of Deacons.

The Function of Deacons was to take care of the Poor; which since that was to be done out of the common Stock of the Church, their particular Office consisted, (1.) In collecting the Money for sacred Uses, and in putting the Church in mind, what things either the whole Church, or some Members of it stood in need of, that so all might contribute to the common

Their Office.

Necessity. (2.) In keeping the Mony, and employing it to those Uses for which it was given. Their Office antiently was during Life, unless they who had discharg'd their Duty were promoted to the Episcopacy; but now 'tis temporary, lasting only for a Year, and is the step of being promoted to the Office of a Presbyter.

Deaconesses.

The Office of Deaconesses has been long since out of use. In the Primitive Church there were Women who in the Name of the Church administred to the Faithful in such things as related to this Animal Life. In the chusing of them care was taken that they should be Widows of sixty Years of Age, and who had been the Wife of but one Husband. Their Duty consisted in taking care of the Poor, especially the Sick and Strangers, who having no other Support, fled to the Church for Relief. We read in Church-History of another Office which they had, *viz.* of administering Baptism to Adult Women, and taking care that their naked Bodies should not be seen by Men.

S E C T. VI.

Of the Ecclesiastical Orders and Dignities of the present Church of Rome.

Besides these Orders of Ordinary Ministers instituted by the Apostles, others were afterwards introduc'd into the Church, not by Apostolical Institution, but by Human and Ecclesiastical Authority: which we do not condemn as unlawful, and to be rooted out of the Church; since we suppose it to be at liberty for good Order sake of making what Alterations in the Form of Government it thinks most suitable to its present State, provided the Duties enjoin'd by God be religiously observed. But those Orders which the *Romanists* have introduc'd, not so much for the Edification of the Faithful, as for the establishing their Spiritual Hierarchy, deserve a more particular Consideration.

The several Ecclesiastical

Their Ecclesiastical Functions are usually distinguish'd into Orders and Dignities. Their Orders are seven,

seven, viz. four Minor, call'd Door-keepers, Readers, *fistical*
Acolytes, and Exorcists; and three Greater, Sub-*Functions*
deacons, Deacons and Priests. The Dignities are *of the*
those of Bishops, Metropolitans, Arch-Bishops, Pa-*Church of*
triarchs, Cardinals, and the Pope. *Rome.*

As to their Orders, we cannot deny, but that some *Their Or-*
of them may be useful to the Church; but this we *ders.*
say in general, that their whole Sett of Orders was on-
ly invented to support the Sacrifice of the Mass, allu-
ding to the Ministration of the Priests and *Levites*
under the Old Testament, which was to be abolished
by the Coming of Christ.

Among their Dignities, the first is Episcopacy. *Their Digi-*
That the Office of Bishops is of Divine Right we have *nities,*
already evinc'd; from whence we may justly infer, *1. Of Bi-*
that the Functions belonging to this Office are of A-*shops.*
postolical and Divine Institution, such as instructing and
governing the Church. This Office then, if consider'd
as at first instituted by the Apostles, is a Ministry
which requires Zeal and Vigilancy, and that a Man
should deny his own Interest for the Welfare of the
Church committed to his Charge. But alas! how far
has Episcopacy, as now establish'd in the Church of
Rome, deviated from its first Institution? Therein we
find no Ministration, but Ecclesiastical Dignity with
full Power and Hierarchical Jurisdiction, which can
without the Civil Authority make Decrees, and im-
pose Laws on the Consciences of the Faithful.

Over Bishops, Metropolitans or Arch-Bishops presi- *Arch-Bi-*
ded, under whose Jurisdiction whole Provinces were *shops.*
subjected. Some derive their Origin from the Apo-
stles themselves, and tell us, that *Titus* was made the
Metropolitan of *Crete*, because he was sent to ordain
Bishops over every City of that Island, which they say
is the business of Metropolitans. But this Inference
seems to be grounded on no solid Foundation. *Titus*
might indeed, as an Assistant of the Apostles, or as
an Evangelist, whose Office was universal, and tied to
no particular Church, be sent by St. *Paul* into *Crete*.
But this cannot be alledged to countenance the present
Practice of the *Romish* Church. However, it cannot
be denied but that the Office of Metropolitans was
very antient in the Church, and introduc'd a few Ages
after

after the Apostles ; doubtless at first with a pious intention for the sake of good Order, and that the Churches scatter'd by severe Persecutions might the more conveniently be taken care of. But Matter of fact informs us, that after the Equality of Bishops was once destroyed, by degrees a way was laid for aspiring to greater Dignities, till at last the Universal Primacy of the Church of *Rome* over all Churches was introduced.

*Patri-
archs.*

For as soon as several Provinces were reduc'd into one Diocess by *Constantine* the Great, Patriarchs or Primates were set over the Metropolitans : The four chief of which were those of *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria* and *Antioch* ; each of them holding their Dignity according to the Rank which the City whereof they were Bishops, held in the *Roman* Empire. Whereas *Rome* was the Head of the Empire, hence it was that the Bishop of *Rome*, upon the account of the Dignity of that City, was stil'd the chief of all the Bishops and Patriarchs. Afterwards when the Seat of the Empire was translated to *Constantinople*, which City was call'd *New Rome*, it was decreed in the Council of *Chalcedon* *, that equal Privileges should be granted to the See of *New Rome*, which the See of *Old Rome* upon the account of its being the Imperial City enjoyed.

Cardinals.

To these in succeeding Ages another Degree of Ecclesiastical Dignity was added, viz. of Cardinals, of which there were few or no Marks in the Primitive Church. For antiently they were only Priests or Deacons of the Church of *Rome*, and call'd Cardinals (as *Bellarmino* would have it) from some principal and Cardinal Churches over which they presided. But at present they are in Dignity above Bishops and Arch-Bishops, in exclusion of whom they alone constitute the Sacred College, and are the only Persons who are concerned in the Election of a Pope, and in assisting and advising him in the Government of the Church.

*The Ro-
man Hie-
rarchy in-
troduc'd by
degrees.*

And thus by degrees from small Beginnings, was founded the Hierarchical Dominion of the See of *Rome*, whilst the Pope laid hold on all occasions of advancing step by step to a higher Post ; till at last partly by

* Canon 27.

Fraud, partly by Force and the Assistance of the Emperor *Phocas*, he acquir'd the Title of Universal Bishop, made himself the Head of the Church, and the Supreme Judge of all Controversies in Religion; and as Vicar of Christ assum'd to himself the Power of governing the Church after an Imperious and Kingly manner. But for the overthrowing of this stately but enchanted Fabrick of the *Romish* Hierarchy, we shall in the next Chapter treat of Church-Government in general, and then shew that this Government was not committed by our Saviour Christ to the Pope of *Rome*.

C H A P. III.

S E C T. I.

Of Church-Government in General.

FOR the more distinct handling this Point of Church-Government, these two things are to be considered: First, to whom the Government of the Church does properly belong; and Secondly, whether any Church-Government, properly so call'd, be granted to any Man here on Earth. These things being duly examin'd, all the rest that relate to the Universal Monarchy of the Pope of *Rome* will be easily dispatch'd.

As to the first Particular; 'tis confess'd on all hands by Christians, that the Supreme Lord and King of the Church, to whom the Government thereof belongs, is our Saviour *Jesus Christ*; since in him alone are to be met with all those Qualifications that are requisite thereto. But the Question is, whether there be not besides Christ, some other Ministerial Head or Universal Pastor of the whole Church, and Christ's Vicar here on Earth, who is set over all the Pastors of particular Flocks, and who is as it were the Visible Monarch of the whole Church. The *Romanists* maintain the Affirmative, and tell us that this Universal Pastor or Bishop is the Pope, whom they usually stile the Vi-

car

car of Christ: But we *Protestants* maintain the contrary. The *Papists* in defence of their Opinion say, (1.) That there ought to be some Government in the Church *. (2.) That this Government ought to be chiefly Monarchical †. (3.) That this Government is granted to *Peter* and his Successors ||.

No visible
Govern-
ment pro-
perly so
called in
the Church.

As to the first of these Positions we say, that there is no necessity for any Visible Government properly so call'd, nor can any such be established in the Church: (1.) Because the Church, as such, is a Spiritual Body, and consequently not capable of any visible Regimen: for the whole Commendation of the Obedience which the Church performs, consists not in any external Act, but in the Sincerity of the Heart and Purity of the Conscience, over which no Man can pretend to have a Dominion. (2.) This Government belongs either to the Pastor, or to the People: Not to the People, as the *Romanists* themselves confess; nor to the Pastor, since his whole Office consists in instructing the People, in exhorting, persuading and reproofing them, and in announcing to them the Promises and Threatnings contain'd in the Holy Scriptures.

The Go-
vernment
of the
Church not
Monarchi-
cal.

As to the second Position, That Church-Government ought chiefly to be Monarchical; *Bellarmino* tells us **, " That among all the Forms of Government, simple Monarchy, bating some Circumstances, is absolutely the best: That however a Monarchy mix'd with Aristocracy and Democracy is more useful in this Life than simple Monarchy; and that this Form of Government has prevail'd in the Church, wherein there is the Monarchy of the Pope, the Aristocracy of Bishops; and the Democracy of the Inferiour Clergy." *Ans.* We shall not at present enquire how consentaneous these things are with what he afterwards advances, but shall only shew that such a Monarchy can have no place in the Church; (1.) Because we no where read of any such Universal Monarch appointed over the Church by Christ. (2.) Our Saviour expressly forbids his Apostles to exercise any

* *Bellarmino*. Lib. 1. de Pontif. Rom. Cap. 5. † *Ibid.* cap. 9.
|| *Ibid.* cap. 10. ** *Bellarmino*. *ibid.* L. 3, & 4.

Lordship one over another'. (3.) There is no need of any such Office in the Church, as there is in a Body Politick: For tho Kings indeed, who cannot be present every where, do appoint their subordinate Officers to administer their Affairs for them in those Places, where they cannot administer them themselves; yet our Saviour being a Heavenly King, is every where spiritually present, knows all things, and can govern his Church personally without the Assistance of any Vicar or Vicegerent. (4.) It is impossible that the Church, which is (as we said) a Spiritual Body, should be governed by a Mortal Man, who cannot search into the Heart, from whence Faith and sincere Obedience proceeds; and consequently cannot know nor punish the Hypocrites, who have only the external Semblance of Religion. (5.) It is absurd and ridiculous to assign two Heads to one Body, two Foundations to one Building, &c.

For the maintaining of this their Ecclesiastical Monarchy, the *Romanists* make use of several Arguments, some of the chiefest of which we will briefly refute. Their first Argument runs thus: "No question (say they) but our Saviour constituted the best Form of Government in his Church: But since Monarchy is a more perfect Form of Government than Aristocracy or Democracy, who can deny but that the Government of the Church is Monarchical?"

Arguments of the Romanists refuted.

Arg. 1. Taken from the Excellency of Monarchy.

Answ. (1.) We say in the general, that it is very dangerous from such sort of Argumentations to conclude any thing for certain concerning the Divine Will: For I might in the same way argue against the Papists, and say, It had been best if God had appointed an Infallible Judg in the Church, who neither in Fact nor Right could err, and therefore he has appointed such a Judg: But this the *Papists* as well as *Protestants* disclaim, and own that even the Pope with his whole Council are fallible. (2.) Supposing that Monarchy, consider'd in it self, were the best Form of Government; yet (by *Bellarmino's* own Confession) not that which consider'd in it self is best, ought to be instituted, but that which is

Mat. 20. 20, &c. Luke 22. 23, &c.

most futable to the State of the Church : But such a Visible Monarchy is not only unfutable thereto, but likewise destructive thereof : because the Church is a spiritual Body, subsisting only by Faith, which ought to be voluntary and unconstrain'd. (3.) The Church has its Monarch, viz. *Jesus Christ*, who takes care of and administers all things by himself, and needs no other subordinate Monarch ; since 'tis more for his Glory to govern the Church personally, than by a Vicar.

Arg. 2.
Taken
from the
Angelical
Hierarchy.

A second Argument they deduce from the Angelical Hierarchy : " Among the Angels (say they) besides " God the Supreme over all, there is one who governs " the rest ; which was *Lucifer* before his Fall, and at " present *Michael*." *Answ.* (1.) We know nothing for certain about the Angelical Hierarchy. That there are certain Degrees of Eminency among the Angels, we do not deny : but whether one or more are set as Chiefs over the rest, cannot be determin'd ; much less that *Lucifer* before his Fall, or *Michael* since, was Prince of the Angels. (2.) There is a vast difference between the Nature and State of Angels and Men ; and consequently no inference can be made from them to establish an Ecclesiastical Hierarchy here upon Earth.

Arg. 3.
Taken
from the
Original of
Church-Government.

Another Argument is taken from the Original of Church-Government, wherein was a Visible Monarch or Head, viz. *Jesus Christ*. " Therefore (say they) " there ought still to be a Visible Head, else the " Church which is at present would not be the same " with what it was formerly." *Answ.* (1.) Our Saviour, whilst on Earth, never assum'd to himself the external Government of the Church : Nor could he conveniently do it so long as the *Aaronical* Priest, whom they maintain to be the Head of the *Jewish* Church, had that Authority invested in him. But (2.) supposing our Saviour was at that time the Visible Monarch of the Church, yet it does not from thence follow, that since his Ascension into Heaven he has substituted any other.

Arg. 4.
Taken
from the
Propagation
of the
Church.

A fourth Argument is taken from the Propagation of the Church. " The Church (say they) cannot be " propagated, but by the Preaching of the Gospel : " But no Man ought to preach unless he be sent'.

Rom. 10. 15.

" Now

"Now particular Bishops, who have only the Care of their own Flocks committed to them, cannot send into the Provinces of others; therefore this ought to be done by an universal Bishop, who has the Charge of the whole Church committed to him."

Ans. That there was no need of any outward Mission to capacitate a Man to teach others, we have already evinc'd. For tho in a Church already establish'd some Mission or Ordination be necessary, for the avoiding of Confusion; yet 'tis not absolutely necessary for any one lawfully to preach the Gospel among Infidels; since 'tis enough if he be thorowly acquainted with the knowledg of the Gospel, and touch'd with an earnest desire after the Salvation of others.

The last Argument we shall mention is taken from the Unity of Faith. " 'Tis requisite (say they) that all the Faithful should be absolutely of the same Mind in matters of Faith; but there cannot be one Faith in Christ, unless there be a Supreme Judge, in whose Decision all Men ought to acquiesce: For if all Men were upon the level, it is scarce possible that any in difficult Points should submit to the Judgment of another. This (cry they) is apparent from those Diffensions that have prevail'd among them who have withdrawn themselves from the Authority of the Bishop of Rome."

Ans. 'Tis not necessary that all Men should be of the same mind, in order to render their Faith one and the same; but only that they should agree in the fundamental Articles of Faith. But this Unity may be obtain'd without the determination of an infallible Judge, provided the Scripture be honestly understood, wherein all things necessary to Salvation are fully and clearly contain'd.

^a Eph. 4. 4, 5.

S E C T. II.

Of the Supremacy of PETER.

Peter
was not
made the
Head of
the Church.

The third thing to be proved is, that St. *Peter* was not appointed by Christ as the Prince of the Apostles, and Head of the Church. Tho we might here only stand up for the Negative, and require the *Romanists* to prove their Assertion; yet we will over and above maintain our Proposition by several Arguments. We say then, that several Privileges were granted to *Peter*, either upon the account of his Age, or his greater Zeal, or for some other Reason; as for instance, that he held the first place among the Apostles, that he often spoke in their Name, that he was the Head of the Apostolical College, with the like. But we meet not with the least Tokens in Scripture of his Monarchy over the rest of the Apostles; but on the contrary many things which intimate his Equality with them. As (1.) when another Apostle was to be chosen in the room of *Judas*, *Peter* did not chuse him by his own Authority, but the whole Assembly by common Consent propos'd two, and the Election was made by Lot, expecting the Issue from the Lord¹; and much the same Method was us'd in the choice of Deacons². (2.) When the Apostles who were at *Jerusalem*, heard that *Samaria* had received the Gospel, they sent unto them *Peter* and *John*³. Now a Superior is not sent forth by his Inferiors, but he sends forth them. (3.) *Peter*, when he was charg'd⁴ with having preached the Gospel to the uncircumcis'd *Gentiles*, did not produce his Authority or Infallibility in his defence, but only makes mention of the Vision he saw. (4.) There are several stil'd Chief Apostles⁵, and three are stil'd *σύλοι*⁶, Pillars, among which *Peter* is rank'd in the second place. (5.) From *Peter*'s being appointed to preach the Gospel to the *Jews*, and *Paul* to the *Gentiles*, we may fairly infer the Equality of their

¹ Acts 1. ² Acts 6. ³ Acts 8. 14. ⁴ Acts 11. ⁵ 2 Cor. 11. 5. ⁶ Gal. 2. 9.

Office. Nor (6.) and lastly, does St. *Peter* in his Epistles arrogate to himself such a Supremacy, but styles himself *ὑποτακτός τῶν πρεσβυτέρων*, a Fellow-Elder, and beseeches and exhorts the other Elders to feed the Flock. And how far is all this from that Monarchical Power which they attribute to *Peter*?

But here the *Romanists* have many things to object to the contrary, tho most of them only infer that St. *Peter* had some Prerogatives more than the rest of the Apostles, which we freely acknowledge, but make nothing at all for his Supremacy. Therefore waving these Objections, we shall only consider two principal Texts of Scripture, on which they found their Assertion.

The first Place is *Mat. 16. 17, 18, 19.* Upon *Peter's* answering our Saviour's Question [*Whom think ye that I am?*] with these Words, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*; our Saviour replies, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this ROCK I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* Here (say the *Romanists*) by the word *ROCK* is meant *Peter*, upon whom, as upon a Rock, the Church is founded. *Answ.* There are several Learned Expositors, who by the word *Rock* understand either the Confession of *Peter*, or the Object of it, viz. *Jesus Christ*, who alone is the Foundation of the Church. But supposing by the word *Rock*, *Peter* is meant, as one designed to be a Teacher of the Church, yet whatever is here said of *Peter* is applicable to the rest of the Apostles, as being also design'd to be Teachers of the Church. We shall not insist upon what they tell us of the Power of the Keys, of Loosing and Unloosing, &c. confer'd upon St. *Peter*; since the same Power is by our Saviour, *John 20. 23.* confer'd on all the Apostles, in words amounting to much the same sense with the Text they produce out of St. *Matthew.*

Objections answered.

Mat. 16. 17, 18, 19. explained.

John 21. Another Place they urge is *John* 21. 15, 16, 17, where our Saviour asks *Peter* thrice this Question *Lovest thou me more than these?* And when *St. Peter* testified his Love to Christ, our Saviour bad him feed his Lambs and Sheep. Here (say they) our Lord confer'd upon *Peter* the Power he had promis'd him *Mat.* 16. and therefore to him alone he says thrice *Feed my Sheep.* *Answ.* What has this Place to do with what our Saviour says in *Matthew?* It refers only to *St. Peter's* thrice denying his Master, and therefore only *Peter* is ask'd the Question, that by his answering thrice he might make some Reparation for his former Denial; which *Peter* himself began to be aware of, when he was concerned at his being ask'd a third time the same Question. As to what they say of Christ's bidding him to feed his Lambs and his Sheep 'tis no more than what belong'd to the rest of the Apostles, and all their Successors after them, who ought to be as careful over the respective Flocks committed to their Charge, as our Saviour commands *Peter* to be.

S E C T. III.

Of the Pope's Supremacy.

*Peter left
no Successor.*

But supposing that *Peter* was by our Saviour made the Chief of the Apostles, what can be infer'd from thence in defence of the Papal Hierarchy? Why, they tell us, that *Peter* ought to have a Successor; and that they endeavour to prove by Arguments drawn from the Monarchical State of the Church, which we have already refuted. But not to insist upon such trifling Reasonings, we ask how it appears that *Peter* has left any Successor behind him? And how comes it to pass that the Bishop of *Rome* is his Successor? Both these are uncertain Points, and have no Text of Scripture to favour them: For *Peter*, as well as the rest of the Apostles, had no Successor in his Office, which was extraordinary and miraculous.

*The Bp of
Rome is
not his Successor.*

And 'tis still more uncertain that the Bishop of *Rome* was his Successor: For what Records do they produce of such a Succession? They tell us indeed that *Peter*

as Bishop of *Rome* for twenty five Years together, and died in that See, and consequently transmitted his Authority to the Bishop who succeeded him: So that whoever shall be legally plac'd upon that See, would enjoy an hereditary Right enjoy *St. Peter's* Supremacy. But who is there that does not perceive that this Argumentation is a Chain of uncertain Suppositions? For suppose that *Peter* was at *Rome*, according to the unanimous Assertion of the Fathers, tho there is no mention of it in Scripture; yet 'tis very uncertain whether he lived twenty five Years at *Rome*, it being irreconcilable to the History of *Peter*, as recorded in Scripture, and to all the Epistles which *St. Paul* wrote from *Rome*, wherein he makes mention of several of his Fellow-Labourers, but says not one word of *Peter*. And 'tis still more uncertain whether he was ever Bishop of *Rome*. But let us for once take all these things for granted; what Record does the Pope produce of his Succession to all the Privileges of *Peter*? Why, none at all. He is therefore no more to be minded than that Person who should pretend that the Bishop of *Jerusalem* was the Head of the Church by Right of Succession, because *Christ*, who is undoubtedly the Head thereof, died at *Jerusalem*. Nay, the Church of *Antioch* has greater Pretensions to the Primacy than the Church of *Rome*, since *St. Peter* was for certain at that City, and the Disciples were first of all call'd CHRISTIANS at *Antioch*.

Having thus overthrown the pretended Supremacy Nor infal-
the Bishop of *Rome*, there is no need to bestow ma-
Words in refuting his Infallibility in Matters of
Faith.
and the Power he pretends to have of determin-
ing all Controversies in Religion. We shall therefore
patch this Point in a word or two. (1.) All Men
subject to Error; nor is there any one exempted
from that common Misfortune. (2.) 'Tis evident that
any Popes have err'd, and falln into Heresy, nor
in the *Papists* themselves deny it; for one there was,
Pope *John XXIII.* who denied a future State,
and the Resurrection of the Flesh. But here the *Papists*

1 Cor. 13. 9. Rom. 3. 4.

N n n 2

come

come to their nice distinction between a Pope, considered as a private Doctor, and as Head of the Church. Consider him in his private Capacity, and they allow that he may err. But as to his publick Capacity, whether a Pope as such, or when he speaks from the Chair (as they term it) can err, here the *Romanists* are divided in their Opinions. Some, as the *Parisian* Doctors for instance, maintain, that the Pope, as Pope may be a Heretick, and teach Heresy, if he determine any thing without a General Council; and that this has sometimes happen'd in Fact. Others on the contrary say, that the Pope can by no means be a Heretick, nor teach Heresy publicly, tho he should determine any thing singly. Lastly, Others tell us that whether the Pope can or cannot be a Heretick yet he can by no means define any Heretical thing to be believed by the whole Church: That the Pope is indeed obliged to consult with learned and skilful Men; but that Infallibility it self is not lodg'd in any Council, or Assembly of Bishops, but only in the Pope himself. Thus we see how inconsistent the *Papists* themselves are with one another in a Matter of so great Concernment.

Nor the
Supreme
Judg of
Controversies.

From hence likewise it follows, that since the Pope is not free from Error in Matters of Faith, he has not an absolute Power of determining all the Controversies rais'd among Christians: For 'tis necessary that he should be Infallible, to whose Decision all Men are obliged to submit, under the Penalty of losing everlasting Salvation. And this is the reason why the warmest Asserters of the Papal Monarchy attribute Infallibility to the Pope; for else they see that they could not solidly argue for such a blind Obedience as they would have Men pay to the Pope. Others among them are of Opinion, that there is no need to ascribe Infallibility to the See of *Rome*, and yet Obedience ought to be paid to it; just as we ought to submit to the Sentence of the Supreme Judge of a Commonwealth, tho that Judge be not free from a possibility of erring. *Ans^r*. Never were things of such a different nature so jumbled together: For the Cause is not the same in Controversies of Faith which affect the Conscience, with Secular and Civil Contests but

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between Man and Man. These last are subject to the Power of the Magistrate, and 'tis necessary that the Contests about them should be determin'd some way or other, since every one ought to be in sure possession of what is his own : Nor is any one bound to approve of the Sentence pronounc'd against him, but only to submit to it. Now 'tis a less Evil to have an unrighteous Judgment pass'd than none at all ; since otherwise downright Force would take place. But the Case is not the same with respect to Controversies in Matters of Faith. It belongs to God only, as to bestow eternal Salvation, so likewise to prescribe the Law of Salvation : And here an outward Confession is not sufficient, but the inward Assent of the Mind is requir'd. No Man has any Authority over another Man's Conscience, but every one is to give an account of his own Faith to God.

But here they object, that by this means all Controversies among Christians would be left undecided, which is absurd. *Answ.* Since God has no where commanded Controversies of Faith to be determin'd, nor appointed any such Judg for the determining them here upon Earth, it is by no means absurd to maintain that he has left them undecided, since he has reserv'd this Right to himself alone. He has left us a clear and perfect Rule of Faith, from whence every Man may learn all things necessary to Salvation : If any Man through his own Negligence, or by any Vice, be ignorant of them, he will be accountable for his Ignorance to God. As for other Points not expressly necessary, since God has not been pleas'd to declare them in Words determin'd expressly to one Sense, neither has he thought fit that they should be decided here ; but design'd to exercise our Industry and Diligence in enquiring after them, and to prove our Charity in the mutual Forbearance of our Failings and Infirmities.

It may be likewise ask'd, whether at least the Pope has not Authority of making some Canons for the external Government of the Church, and of prescribing them to others, so as that no Christian may deny Obedience thereto? To this we reply, That the Pope has in his Diocess the same Authority which other Bi-

An Objection answered.

A Query answered.

shops have in theirs: but that none of them has Power of framing Canons at pleasure, or of authoritatively prescribing the Observation of them to the Church. That they can make no Canons relating to Faith, is plain from what has been already said. But as to things relating to the outward Government of the Church, the Direction of which is by the common Consent of the Faithful committed to Bishops, they have so far a Power of appointing them, that all things in the Church of God may be done decently and in order. But they can impose nothing on the Consciences of the Faithful, nor compel those to Obedience who disobey their Decrees; since all their Power consists in Persuasion, and not in Compulsion: and the Obedience which is to be paid to their Decrees ought to be free, voluntary, and unconstrain'd. Of this nature is the Bishop of Rome's Authority over his own Church, which he cannot extend to the Diocesses of other Bishops: without the most unwarrantable Tyranny and Usurpation.

S E C T. .IV. Of ANTICHRIST.

The Meaning of the word Antichrist.

For the fuller treating of this Point concerning Antichrist, we will say something concerning the Term it self. Now the word *Ἀντίχριστος*, by virtue of the Participle *ἀντι*, properly denotes one who is against, or contrary to Christ. But the Protestants are generally of opinion, that Antichrist is not only one who is against Christ, but also one who pretends to be the Vicar of Christ. And on this Sense of the Word we may easily rely, nor need we enter into a large Dispute with the *Papists* about the Signification thereof. For tho it cannot be said that a Vicar of Christ, appointed by Christ himself, and governing the Church according to his Laws, and consequently by his Authority is contrary to him: Yet he may be truly said to be opposite to Christ, who boasts himself to be Christ's Vicar, makes himself without any Authority the Head of the Church, and prescribes to it his own Laws without any regard had to the Commandments of Christ,

But to descend from the Word to the Thing it self; *The Romanists* there are two very different Opinions about the Person of Antichrist. The first is the Opinion of the *Romanists*, who tell us, "That Antichrist will be a single Person, who will come and reign about the End of the World, and that an entire Destruction of the *Roman* Empire will precede his Coming; and that *Enoch* and *Elias* will then appear, who are still alive, and live to the end that they may oppose Antichrist when he does come, preserving the Elect in the Faith, and at last converting the *Jews*. That Antichrist shall raise the severest Persecution, so that all the Publick Ceremonies and Sacrifices of Religion shall cease: but he shall reign no more than three Years and a half, after which shall come the End of the World. That he shall be born of a Harlot, proceed from the Tribe of *Dan*, appear chiefly for the sake of the *Jews*, by whom he shall be received as the true *Messias*, shall be circumcised, and keep the Sabbath, at least for a time; and that his Seat shall be *Jerusalem*, the Temple and Throne of *David*. That the Sum of his Doctrine will consist in denying *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, and affirming that he himself is the true *Messias* promis'd by the Prophets; nay, that he is the true and only God, and consequently will set himself against not only the true God, but also the false ones. That he will work many lying Miracles, such as causing Fire to come down from Heaven, speaking the Language of the Beast, and pretending to die and rise again. Lastly, that coming out of a very low Place, he will by Fraud gain the Kingdom over the *Jews*, fight with the three Kings of *Egypt*, *Lybia* and *Ethiopia*, and make himself Master of their Kingdoms, subdue seven other Kings, and by that means become the Universal Monarch of the whole World, &c."

The other Opinion is that of the *Protestants*, viz. And of the That Antichrist will not be a single Person, but a certain Order and Series of Men, sitting in one and the same See by Succession: So that when Antichrist is described, a certain Kingdom or Empire is also described, which is successively to be administered by

many, and that the Predictions concerning Antichrist suite with every single Person that presides over this Empire. That this Kingdom is the Empire of the Pope, because, *Rev. 13, & 17.* the Seat thereof is expressly said to be *Rome*; and *2 Thess. 2.* he is describ'd with such Characters as exactly agree with the Bishop of *Rome*. Hence the common Opinion of *Protestants* is, that the Pope, who pretends to be Christ's Vicar here on Earth, the Infallible Judg of all Controversies of Earth, who prescribes Laws to be binding on the Consciences of Men, with the like, is that Notable Antichrist prefigur'd to us in Scripture.

The Absurdity of the Popish Opinion.

As to the Popish Opinion, 'tis full of Romance, and seems to have been invented only on purpose, by some way or other to evade all the Arguments us'd by the Protestants to prove the Pope to be the great Antichrist. Nay, if it be duly examin'd, it is both incredible, and destructive of it self: For how can Antichrist, who is but a single Person, and according to them is to reign but three Years and a half, in so short a space deceive so many Nations, and insatuate them so far, as that renouncing all their former Religion, they should worship him as the only God? How can he in so short a time fight so many Battels, build a great Temple, there sit as an Idol, and raise Persecutions against the Christians over the whole World? How can the Temple, which is erected in opposition to God, be stiled by the Apostle the Temple of God?

Antichrist not a single Person, but a Succession of Persons in the same See.

But passing by these Fooleries and Fables, we shall take into examination the chief Heads of the Controversy concerning Antichrist. The first Debate then is whether Antichrist be a single Person, as the *Romanists* maintain, or a certain Order and Succession of Persons sitting in one and the same Seat, and succeeding each other, each of which is Antichrist, and whose Kingdom is stil'd the Kingdom of Antichrist, as the *Protestants* assert? The Opinion of the *Papists* is founded only on this single Principle, viz. That the Scripture all along speaks of Antichrist in the Singular Number, as of a single Person. As *2 Thess. 2. 3.* *ὁ ἀνθρώπος ὁ ἀμαρτίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, &c.* *The Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, &c.* But on the contrary we say, that not only an Enallage, by which the Singular

Singular Number with an Article is put for the Plural, is often us'd in Scripture (thus *ὁ ἄρσεν* signifies all Mankind, *ὁ σαλᾶς*, the whole Body of Devils') But 'tis likewise very common in Scripture-phraſe to ſpeak of a whole Series of Men ſucceeding one another in the ſame Office, as of a ſingle Perſon. Thus when 'tis ſaid *, that the High Prieſt entreth into the Holy Place every Year, it muſt certainly be underſtood of all the High Prieſts, who by a continued Series ſucceeded one another. After the ſame manner *Daniel* * by one Beaſt does not mean one King, but a Succeſſion of Kings ſitting upon the ſame Throne.

Having diſpatch'd this Point, and prov'd that Anti-chriſt was not to be one particular Perſon, we ſhall now conſider diſtinctly his Riſe, Progreſs and Height, as alſo the Signs by which he is to be known, ſuch as the Time and Place of his Empire, his Actions and Empire it ſelf; from which Indications we ſhall be able to gather who the Antichriſt foretold in Scripture is. The common Opinion of the Reformed is, as we ſaid before, that the Pope of *Rome* is denoted by Antichriſt; and this they aſſert and maintain as confidently, as if it were an Article of Faith, and look upon it as highly criminal to make the leaſt doubt of it. As for my part, tho I dare not with the ſame aſſurance maintain, that the Biſhop of *Rome* was deſcribed by the Apoſtles by the Man of Sin, the Beaſt riſing out of the Earth, having the Horns of a Lamb, and by the Whore ſitting upon the Beaſt; yet I am not afraid to ſay, that moſt of the principal things foretold of Antichriſt, or the Son of Perdition, ſute very well with the Pope of *Rome*: and conſequently that we have great reaſon to withdraw from his Communion, if not as Antichriſt, yet as the unjuſt Uſurper of a Dominion over the Church, the Head of an Apoſtacy ſet up in oppoſition to the true Doctrine of Chriſt, and the Author of a violent Perſecution rais'd againſt the faithful Servants of God. But to proceed to the particular Marks of Antichriſt.

What we ought to think of Antichriſt.

* Mar. 3. 26. Luke 11. 18. To the ſame purpoſe conſult Mat. 19. 10. Mar. 2. 27. & 7. 23. Luke 4. 4. Joh. 2. 25. & 7. 51. Rom. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 3. 17. * Heb. 9. 25. * Dan. 7. In

1. *The Place of his Empire, Rome.* In the first place then, as to the Seat of his Empire, it is expressly said it should be at *Rome*: Thus 'tis said, *Rev. 13. 1. I saw a Beast rise up out of the Sea, having seven Heads and ten Horns, &c. Compar'd with Chap. 17. 9--18. where we have this Explication of the former Passage: The seven Heads are seven Mountains, on which the Woman sitteth: And again, The Woman which thou sawest is that great City, which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.* So that from these Texts 'tis plain where the Seat of Antichrist was to be, and there can be no Dispute but that *Rome* was here hinted at.

2. *He was to appear by degrees.* But secondly, 'tis foretold of him, that he should appear by degrees, and that at the first he should work Iniquity so secretly, as that he should not be perceiv'd, until the Obstacles which hinder'd him were remov'd; as we are clearly told, *2 Thess. 2. 7.* Let us apply this Circumstance to the Bishop of *Rome*, He did not arrive all on the sudden to that Power, which he has at present assum'd, but by degrees. Even in *St. Paul's* time, when he wrote his Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, some there were who began secretly to spread their Errors, and to endeavour at least after a Dominion over the Church; which could not indeed be understood of the Bishops of *Rome*, that Church being scarce planted at that time. But after the Apostolical Age, the Bishop of *Rome*, upon the account of the Greatness and Authority of his City, began by degrees to lord it over the other Bishops, and to arrogate a Power over the rest of the Churches: But the Emperor's Presence was a hindrance for some time of the Pope's assuming a secular Authority over them. When *Constantine* turn'd Christian, and translated the Seat of the Empire to *Constantinople*, the Emperor's Authority began to be lessen'd at *Rome*, and the Pope's Power received a wonderful Increase, till at last *Boniface III.* obtain'd the Title of Universal Bishop from the Emperor *Phocas*, who murder'd his Predecessor *Mauritius*. Afterwards Pope *Stephen III.* acquir'd a Secular Authority from the Liberality of King *Pepin*, and annex'd a Temporal Dominion to his Spiritual Power. But even then the Popes were not absolute Monarchs, till at last *Gregory VII.* wrested out of the Emperor's hands

all

all the Authority they had over their Ecclesiasticks, and advanced the Papacy to its highest Pitch of Grandeur. And thus from one step to another did the Popes rise to that Height we now see them in.

Thirdly, Antichrist, *Rev.* 17. 10. is described as one ^{3.} *He was* that shall be the seventh Ruler of the City of *Rome*. ^{to be the} This and other Characters to be met with here, and ^{7th Ruler} Chap. 13. seem to represent the Bishop of *Rome* and ^{of the City} his Empire to the very life: However, we shall not ^{of Rome.} pretend to dictate any thing to others, nor assume any Magisterial Air in our Exposition of these Passages, but submit what we have to say to the Judgment and Censure of the pious Reader. As to the Explication of what is contained in these Chapters, it is said, that a Beast was seen having seven Heads, and that by these Heads were meant seven Kings; by which we are not to understand so many particular Persons, but (according to the Language of Scripture) a Series of Kings or Governours succeeding one another in the same Empire. By seven Kings then we understand the seven Forms of Government which prevailed in *Rome* under, (1.) Kings. (2.) Consuls. (3.) The Consular *Decemviri*. (4.) The Tribunes of the Soldiery invested with Consular Authority. (5.) The Dictators or *Triumvirate*. (6.) The Emperors. And (7.) The Christian Popes. Five of these are said to be fallen, because the Emperors were then in Authority; and therefore 'tis added that one is, and the other, *viz.* the seventh, is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short Space. These last Words, if applied to the Pope, may seem to admit of some difficulty, because he has not continued a short time, but for some Ages. However, this is not to be understood of Popes, as they are Bishops of *Rome*, but as they are the Head of the Papal Monarchy; after which indeed they aspir'd for some time before, but did not fully attain it till the fourteenth Century under the Empire of *Charles IV.* who quitted his Pretensions to any Authority over the City of *Rome*. We pass by the other Characters of Antichrist given in those Chapters, since they are abstruse, and may admit of a different Interpretation, and shall proceed to what is more clearly reveal'd.

Fourthly,

4. The
Marks of
Antichrist,
as describ'd
2 Theff. 2.
consider'd.

Fourthly then we say, the Marks and Tokens by which Antichrist is described, 2 Theff. 2. do very well suite with the Pope of Rome. For (1.) he is there stil'd the Man of Sin, and the Son of Perdition; by which Phrases is denoted a Man notoriously wicked, and one who promotes the Wickedness of others, and consequently is consign'd over by God to a just Punishment. Now to apply this to the Popes, we need only read over the Histories of Gregory VII. Boniface VII. and Alexander VI. (to mention no more) and we shall find so much Avarice, Ambition, Luxury, Cruelty, and other unheard of Vices, as never prevail'd so much in other Men, no not in the very Pagan Emperors themselves. Add to this, that by their Dispensations and Indulgences they have given the greatest encouragement to other Mens Sins. But (2.) Antichrist in the same place is said to be one who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is call'd God; i. e. above all the Princes of the Earth, who in Scripture are stiled Gods; upon the account of their Authority, which they derive from God, as being his Vicegerents here. Now 'tis too notorious what a Power the Popes have usurped to themselves over all Crowned Heads, by pretending to depose whom they please, to dispose of their Dominions, and treading insolently on the Necks of Emperors, under whose Authority they formerly were subject. (3.) It is said of Antichrist, that he shall sit in the Temple of God, and shall shew himself that he is God; which is a farther aggravation of his Arrogance, in that he will neither submit himself to God nor Man. And how far the Pope comes up to this Character, let the World judg from his pretending to Infallibility, usurping a Power over the Consciences of Men, which is only God's Prerogative, granting Dispensations contrary to the Word and Will of God, and having a sort of Religious Worship paid him, not only by the Adoration of the Laity, when he appears in publick, but also by obliging even Cardinals, Prelates, Princes and Emperors to fall down before him, and kiss his Feet. (4.) He is stil'd ἀνταρ, without

* Exod. 22. 28. Psal. 82. 6,

Law, one who is not only a notorious Transgressor both of Divine and Human Laws, but also who pretends to be under the Obligation of no Law. And what is more evident than that this sutes with the Pope, who believes himself not to be under the Tie of any Laws, who judges all Men, whilst (as his Flatterers tell him) he is subject to the Censure of no Man?

(5.) His Coming is said to be after the working of *Satan*, with all Power, and Signs, and lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness: *i.e.* He will make use of all the Arts of Seduction, and even work by himself or his Ministers Signs and Wonders: But these will not be true, but lying Miracles. Now if we apply this to the Pope, we shall find that in him it has exactly its Completion. His Deceivableness hath been with Efficacy and Power: Emperors, Kings, Princes, and all People, some few excepted, have been seduc'd by him, and have consented to his false Doctrine. He has us'd all the powerful Methods of Deceiving, by which Men, in whose Minds the Love of Truth is waxed cold, are easily captivated: for he not only boasts of Miracles, as the Mark of his Church's being true; but likewise assumes to himself and his Church alone the Title of the True Church. To the same purpose he pretends to Antiquity and Universal Consent, and wrests the Scriptures to a wrong Sense. But he is most powerful by the Allurement of Rewards, and by the Authority he assumes of inflicting Punishments, and the great Liberty he grants to his Followers. (6.) And lastly, it is foretold that a sharp and cruel Persecution should be rais'd by Antichrist against the Faithful, which is very lively set forth by St. *John*, Rev. 17. 6. *I saw the Woman drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus.* There is no need to prove this, since the *Papists* urge the same Text, and bring it as an Argument to prove that Antichrist is not yet come. But to us it seems to be a manifest Character of the Pope of *Rome*: For if we make a Comparison between the Persecutions rais'd formerly against the Christian Church by the Pagan Emperors, and those rais'd against the Faithful by Papal Tyranny of late Years, we shall find that *Rome* Papal has outdone *Rome* Pagan.

It

It is not enough with them to put the Hereticks to death, but the most exquisite of Torments must be invented to shew the full Stretch of their persecuting Spirits. Their Excommunications have been issued out not only against private Persons, but also against whole Bodies and Communities of Men: and lest their Bulls should be only Noise, Kings and Princes have been stirred up to root out those miserable People with Fire and Sword, without any distinction either of Sex or Age. To this purpose have they in some Places erected their bloody Tribunals of the Inquisition, to which not only the Secrets of Families, but even of the Consciences of Men were by Racks and Tortures to be discovered: In other places, Dragoons and Gallies, Fines, Confiscations and Banishment have been us'd to root out the remainder of the Northern Heresy, as they term it. Now what is all this but the characteristick Mark of the Great Whore, who makes her self drunk with the Blood of the Saints and Martyrs of the Lord *Jesus*?

S E C T. V.

The Opinion of Grotius concerning Antichrist examin'd.

The Opinion of H. Grotius.

Hitherto we have evinc'd against the *Romanists*, that whatsoever things the Holy Ghost has foretold concerning Antichrist, may very well be applied to the Pope of *Rome*. We shall now take into consideration what the Learned Expofitor *Hugo Grotius* has said in this matter. He, out of a pious Motive of healing the unhappy Divisions of the Church, and of re-uniting it into one Body, being willing to remove the main Obstacle thereto, *viz.* the full Persuasion of the Reformed that the Pope of *Rome* was that great Antichrist foretold by the Apostles, has invented a new and un-heard of Explication of all those Texts that are believed to treat of Antichrist, very unsutable to the Skill he has shewn in interpreting other Places of Scripture. For by a violent wresting of those Texts, he endeavours to shew how they have had already their Completions in Persons of former Times, and who have had nothing in common with the Pope.

As

As to the famous Prophecy, 2 *Theff.* 2. *Grotius* is of the 2d *Epistle to the* opinion that by the Man of Sin is meant *Caius Caligula*, whose Wickedness the Apostle foretels should be reveal'd before the coming of the Lord to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; in order to confirm the Minds of the Faithful, lest they should be disturbed at the laying of that Judgment. But this Explication may be convinc'd of an Error, by only considering that this *Epistle* was written when *Claudius* was Emperor, and so could not foretel any thing of his Predecessor *Caius*, who was then dead and gone. And since this Argument alone is sufficient to refute the Exposition of *Grotius*, we shall insist a little upon it. It is certain then, nor can *Grotius* deny it, that *Paul's* first going to the *Thessalonians* happen'd in the Reign of *Claudius*, since 'tis related, *Acts* 17. when *Claudius* was Emperor, as appears from *Acts* 11. 28. since the Famine there mentioned fell out, according to the Testimony of *Josephus**, in the fourth Year of *Claudius*. Again, *Acts* 12. 28. we have an account of the Death of *Herod*, which King reign'd three Years under the Empire of *Claudius*†. But this *Epistle* was writ after *St. Paul* had been with the *Thessalonians*. With respect to the former *Epistle*, the Case is so evident, that it can admit of no dispute; since the Apostle expressly declares that he had visit'd that Church, and he says the same thing in his second *Epistle*‡.

But tho we should grant to *Grotius*, that this *Epistle* was written in any Year he pleases to fix upon; yet his Exposition has not the least Probability on its side: Nay, there are many things which shew that this Prediction has nothing to do with *Caius*. For (1.) Apostacy attributed to the Man of Sin here described cannot belong to *Caius*, if by Apostacy we here understand a Defection from the Worship of the true God; because *Caius* never worshipp'd the true God. (2.) It cannot be said of *Caius*, that he should be revealed, since he was already, by *Grotius's* own Confession, in

Several things in it not applicable to *Caius*.

* Antiq. Lib. 20. Cap. 11. † Ibid. Lib. 19. Cap. 7.

‡ 1 *Theff.* 1. 4, 5, &c. & 2. 11, &c. 2 *Chap.* 2. 5. & 3, 7, 10.

possession

possession of the Empire. (3.) It is said that he should sit in the Temple of God; now whether we understand this of the Church of the Faithful, or of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, as *Grotius* would have it, it can in neither sense be said of *Caius*, that he sat in the Temple of God.

Simon
Magus
not meant
by the Per-
son without
Law.

As for the *Ἀνόμωτος*, or Person without Law, mention'd *Ver. 8*, &c. *Grotius* does not understand it of *Caius*, but of *Simon Magus*; whereas on the contrary, the whole Context informs us that mention is made of one and the same Person, and that no distinction can be allowed of, without great Violence offer'd to the whole Series of this noted Prediction.

1 Joh. 2.
18, &c.
explain'd.

Again, *Grotius* would have it, that by the noted Antichrist mention'd 1 *John* 2. 18, &c. is meant *Barchochabas*, and by the many Antichrists, those false Christs who preceded the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. But supposing that by the last Time is understood the Destruction of the *Jews*, yet it cannot with any shew of Probability be from thence infer'd, that by the Notable Antichrist *Barchochabas* is meant; since the Coming of Antichrist is foretold as the Sign of that last Time; whereas *Barchochabas* did not appear till after *Jerusalem* was destroyed. But tho we should grant that by the Antichrists we are to understand the false Christs foretold by our Saviour, yet this would have no relation to the Antichrist eminently so call'd, nor would it prejudice the main Cause.

Revel. 13.
1, &c. ex-
plained.

There is greater force in what he says with relation to the 13th and 17th Chapters of the *Revelation*; in which *Grotius* maintains that not the Empire of one single Person is foretold, but the Heathen Idolatry is described. We shall just touch upon the principal Matters, because we would not enlarge too much. With respect then to the 13th Chapter, *ver. 1*. he by the Beast rising out of the Sea, understands Idolatry prevailing and raging after a furious manner. But how can this be reconciled with *Ver. 4*. where the Beast is said to be worshipped? Now 'tis not Idolatry, but the Idol that is worshipp'd. What is said concerning the other Beast, *Grotius* takes to be meant of the Magick of *Apollonius Tyaneus*. "The Head of the first Beast, which is wounded to Death, is understood by him to

" be

be the Capitol that was burnt down when the *Vitellians* and *Flavians* war'd against each other: That the healing of this Wound was the rebuilding of the Capitol by *Vespasian*: That the rising of the first Beast out of the Sea, was the Rise of Idolatry, by the Force and Power of the Empire; and the rising of the latter out of the Earth denotes the Origin of Magick, which prevail'd not publicly, but privately: That the two Horns of the Lamb signify the Abstinence and Chastity of the Magicians; and by exercising the Power of the former Beast, is meant the celebrating of Sacrifices. The Wonders done in the sight of the Beast, he says, are the various Miracles of *Apollonius*; the Wound by a Sword is the Preaching of the Gospel, by which Idolatry seem'd to have receiv'd its fatal Blow: The Image of the Beast, to which the Spirit of the Beast was given that he should speak, is (as *Grotius* tells us) the Likeness of *Achilles* confer'd upon *Apollonius*; and in whom the Devil spake." But who is there that does not pity the Weakness of this great Man? For these things hang so ill together, that they need not any large Confutation. For the Wonders of *Apollonius* were not so great, nor did he deceive so many, or restore Idolatry, which seem'd to be decay'd, as some imagine; and 'tis a very uncertain Method, in the application of the Events of a Prophecy, to rely upon the Authority of *Philostratus*, whose History is so full of Romance.

Nor is *Grotius* more happy in his Conjectures with *John* in relation to what is contained in the 17th Chapter of the Revelations. The Foundation he goes upon, is, that *John* when he was in *Patmos* began in the days of *Claudius* to have the Divine Visions reveal'd to him, and that this Vision in particular happen'd in the Times of *Vespasian*. But what a weak Foundation is this? All Historians declare that *John* was banish'd to *Patmos* under the Reign of *Domitian*; and from whence does it appear that he was banish'd under *Claudius*?

The Foundation then being overthrown, his Conjectures will soon fall to the ground. "By the Word man he understands *Rome*; by the seven Kings, "seven

Kings, and the Eighth, refuted. " seven Emperors, who reign'd whilst *John* dwelt at *Patmos*. Five of them were already fallen, and that by a violent Death, viz. *Claudius*, *Nero*, *Galba*, *Otho*, and *Vitellius*: One is, viz. *Vespasian*; and another was yet for to come, and to continue but a short space; to wit, *Titus* who reign'd but two Years and two Months. By the Beast, which is call'd the Eighth King, he understands *Domitian* who was and is not; i. e. who whilst his Father was absent in *Syria* and *Egypt*, exercis'd the whole Power at *Rome*; but that when *John* wrote this he was reduc'd by his Father to a private Capacity. Now who does not perceive, but that all these things depend on the Foundation we have overthrow'n?

As also concerning the ten Kings.

Again, by the ten Kings who had not as yet received the Kingdom, but who should receive Power as Kings one hour with the Beast, and who should deliver up their Power to the Beast, he understands the Kings of the *Ostrogoths*, *Visigoths*, *Vandals*, &c. who reigned in the Borders of the *Roman* Empire, and were in Alliance with the *Romans*. But here again there is no Connection with what went before. At one time *Domitian* was the Beast; and now the *Roman* Empire, or Emperors two hundred Years after *Domitian*. How ill do these things hang together! But we shall not follow *Grotius* any farther; and the little we have said, may be sufficient to shew how groundless and incoherent his Conjectures are.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Church it self.

HAVING thus treated of the Ministration of the Word by which the Church was form'd, and of the Ministers and Government of it, by which it was propagated and preserv'd; we shall proceed to treat of the Church it self, wherein there are these two things considerable: first, the Parts of which the Church is compounded; and secondly, the Attributes of it.

S E C T. I.

Of the various Divisions and Parts of the Church.

For the due understanding the Parts of which the Church is compounded, we shall consider the several Divisions of it, and shall begin with that noted Distinction of the *Romanists*, by which they distribute the Church into Militant here on Earth, Labouring in Purgatory, and Triumphant in Heaven. As for the second Branch of this Division, we may very justly explode it, since by what we have elsewhere * said concerning Purgatory, it appears to be a fictitious State. But with respect to the first Branch, 'tis confess'd on all hands; since a Christian's Life is a Warfare, and a Spiritual Fight against all our Spiritual Enemies'. Hence it is that our Saviour bids us strive to enter in at the strait Gate', and St. Paul says of himself that he has fought the good Fight'. Nay, the persevering Christians, who live up to the Precepts of their Saviour, are stil'd Conquerors, on whom he will bestow a Crown of Righteousness*. As to the third Branch of

The Church is either Militant here on Earth, or Triumphant in Heaven.

* Ch. 4. §. 1.

1 Eph. 6. 12, &c. 1 Tim. 6. 12.

2 Luke 13. 24.

3 2 Tim. 4. 7. 4 Rev. 2, & 3.

this Division, we do verily believe the Church Triumphant will take place in the World to come, at the Resurrection of the Just, when Death the last Enemy of the Faithful shall be subdued¹, and when every one shall receive a Crown from their Just Judg². But before the Resurrection of the Dead, tho' the Souls of the Faithful separated from their Bodies, be in a State of Safety, and are preserv'd by Christ in the hopes of a blessed Resurrection, yet that they are not in the enjoyment of a full Triumph, appears by what we have said³ (B. 6. C. 4. §. 1.) of departed Souls in a State of Separation.

The Church is either Representing or Represented.

Secondly, Both *Protestants* and *Papists* usually divide the Church into that which is Representing and Represented. By the former they understand the Rulers and Pastors, or the Councils with the Pastors; by the latter, the whole Congregation of Believers, consider'd apart from the Governours. As for my part I freely grant, that in Matters of lesser moment, especially in such as relate to the well-ordering and external Decency of the Church, the Presbytery may very well represent the Church, and such Matters may be committed to the care of some few delegated to that purpose, either by the Presbytery, or by the whole Body of the Church, that so the Order and Decorum of it may be maintain'd. But then as to Matters of Faith, no man can commit them to the Charge of another without hazarding his own Salvation: for God will require of every man an account of his own Faith and Works; nor can any Person arrogate to himself this Authority over the Church without being guilty of Tyranny and Treason against the Divine Majesty.

The Church is either Universal, or Particular.

Thirdly, The Church is said to be Catholick or Universal, and Particular. The Term Catholick is not a Scriptural Expression, but is to be met with in the Creed, and very frequently in the Writings of the Fathers, and is variously understood. As (1.) to denote the Christians of all Times and Places: (2.) Of all Places, but such as exist at one and the same time.

¹ 1 Cor. 15, 26. ² 2 Tim. 4, 8.

Both these Acceptations are good ; however, to avoid all Equivocations in Dispute, we should explain in which sense we take it. (3.) The *Romanists* and some of the Reformed take it to denote the Orthodox Church ; which Signification is very improper, and they who understand it thus, do manifestly abuse the word *Catholick*. Because first, it may so happen, that Errors may overspread the whole Church ; and the Multitude of those who assent to an Error bestows no such Privilege upon it, as that it should be embrac'd for Truth. Secondly, because every Man may ascribe Orthodoxy to himself ; no Man in his own Judgment condemning himself of an Error, and consequently many will assume the Title of *Catholick* to themselves ; which is absurd. A particular Church is that which is gather'd in any particular Places of the Earth, as at *Jerusalem, Corinth, Rome, &c.* For the Church of *Rome* is no more *Catholick* than any other Church whatsoever. Those particular Churches differ from the Universal only in Extent, they being really the constituent Parts of the *Catholick Church*. No Marks therefore of Excellency, no Privileges of the Assistance of the Divine Spirit are attributed to the Universal, but what are applicable to the particular Churches. Which is to be maintain'd in opposition to the *Romanists*, who own indeed that particular Churches may err, but that the Universal cannot.

But fourthly, particular Churches admit of a fourfold Division. (1.) With respect to Doctrine ; some are Orthodox, which profess the true and saving Doctrine of the Gospel, not that they are free from all, but only from fundamental Errors : Others are Heretical, who profess and maintain such Errors as are destructive of the Fundamentals of Faith. (2.) With respect to Divine Worship ; some are Idolatrous, which worship God by Images, or pay that Honour to any Creature, which is due only to God and Christ. Others are the true Worshipers of God, which tho they may not be free from all Superstition, yet are clear of the Guilt of Idolatry. (3.) With respect to Manners ; some are pure, which as far as is consistent with human Infirmities, endeavour sincerely to approve themselves in the sight of God, are unpolluted with

*A fourfold
Subdivi-
sion of the
particular
Church.*

those gross Sins which exclude Men from the Kingdom of Heaven; or if any of their Members fall into such Sins, do correct and amend him by a severe Discipline: Others are Impure Churches, which act downright contrary to these things. (4.) Upon the account of Union; some are Schismatical, who for some slight and unreasonable Causes (as all are, beside sinful Terms of Communion, such as Heresy, Idolatry, open Profaneness and Tyranny) separate from others, with whom they before made up but one Body: Whilst there are on the contrary some other Churches, which endeavour all they can to maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; which offer to those who are separated from them reasonable Terms of Union, and upon their refusal of those Terms, are still ready to exercise all the Acts of Christian Charity towards them. Such as these last, if any difference arise between the Members of the Church, bestow their utmost Endeavours to compose it, that it may not break out into a Schism, comply in all things so far as they can with a safe Conscience, that so they may not be the Authors nor the Abettors of a Schismatical Separation.

*The Church
either Visible
or Invisible.*

Fifthly, The Catholick, as well as the particular Church, is distinguish'd into Visible and Invisible. The Visible is a Congregation or Society of those Persons who openly profess the true and saving Doctrine of the Gospel, altho all the Members thereof should not heartily believe it, nor be the lively Members of the Body of Jesus Christ. The Invisible Church is a Society of those, who not only profess the Doctrine of the Gospel with their Mouths, but likewise sincerely believe in Christ, and heartily lead Lives conformable to the Precepts of our Saviour.

*In what
sense call'd
Invisible.*

For a more distinct View of this Distinction (since the *Romanists* usually laugh at an Invisible Church, as a Figment) we must enquire what things are considerable in the Church, or in the constituent Parts of it; which are these three: (1.) The Men of which it is compos'd. (2.) The true Faith and Piety of the Mind. (3.) The outward Declaration of that inward Faith and Piety. In the first respect it cannot be question'd but that they are Visible, and there lies no Controversy about it. In the second case, it cannot be

be denied, but that Men are Invisible, because the inward Faith and Piety of a Man are wholly hid from mortal Eyes. But in the third Case again Men are Visible; *i. e.* they give such external Indications and Professions of their Faith and Piety, as are visible by others: they profess the Doctrine of the true Faith, exercise such Works of Piety and Charity, as that they ought in a charitable Construction to be reputed as true Believers. But whereas the Profession of Faith, and the outward Acts of Piety may be performed by Hypocrites, who only put on the Semblance of Religion, as well as by true Believers: hence it is that no man can undoubtedly and infallibly determine by the external Performance, who is a true and genuine Member of Christ's Body. The Church therefore is call'd Visible with respect to this external Profession; because the outward Profession of Faith, the Order observ'd in the Church, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Exercise of Discipline, &c. occur to the Eyes, not only of Believers, but likewise of Infidels. It is call'd Invisible, with respect to the inward Faith and Piety, which alone make a Man a true and lively Member of Christ, and an Heir of Salvation: because they are conspicuous to no Mortal, and are undiscernible by the external Signs.

Against this Notion of an invisible Church, the *Romanists* start many Objections, but withal so trifling and inconsiderable, that they do not deserve any Answer, and therefore we shall pass them over in Silence.

S E C T. II.

Of the Attributes of the Church; and first, whether it be Infallible.

In the foregoing Section we considered the several Divisions or constituent Parts of the Church; we are next to treat of its Attributes, which are chiefly reckoned to be these; its Infallibility, its Perpetuity, or (that I may coin a new Word) its Indesectibility, and the Tokens by which it may be known. In discoursing of the first Attribute, we shall enquire, Whether the Church can err? Passing by what the *Romanists* say in this

That the Church may err.

this Matter; who tell us that particular Churches may err in points of Faith and Manners, but that the Catholick Church cannot err in Faith, tho' it may in Manners: we shall comprise our Opinion concerning the Infallibility of the Church under the following Propositions. (1.) We say then, that the Church, whether Catholick or Particular, whether Representing or Represented, whether of true Believers or hypocritical Professors, may fall into Error, not only in Points of less moment, but even in Articles of Faith necessary to Salvation: but with this distinction, that the Church ceases to be a true Church, when it errs in things necessary, but not when it only errs in things not necessary. (2.) We say, that the Church of all Times and Places never fell so far as to cease from being the Church of Christ; but only that Church which existed at some certain Period of Time. For tho' every individual Person, consider'd in himself, may fall into a grievous and damnable Error; yet we believe that all of them could not at one and the same time so far relapse; but that God would be always present to the Faithful with the Assistance of his Grace, that so Christians of every Place should not all at once fall into Damnable Errors. (3.) We add, that 'tis not necessary in order to denominate the Catholick Church, or even any particular Church, erroneous, that all and every Person belonging to it, none excepted, should be involv'd in Error; but 'tis enough, if those Errors be establish'd by publick Authority, defended by Learned Men, and not publicly refuted: altho' some true Believers may lie conceal'd here and there in several Places, but not enow to make up a Church of such in any one Place. We shall first of all establish our Opinion by several Arguments, and then answer the Objections which may be rais'd against it.

*Prov'd by
several Ar-
guments.*

Arg. 1.

In the first place then we say, That all particular Churches may err in Faith: and therefore the Catholick Church made up of these as its constituent Parts, may also err. The Antecedent is prov'd, (1.) Because all Churches consist of Men alike subject to Error; nor has any Church a Privilege to the contrary, unless it were resolv'd by any Divine Decree that it should be free from Error, and this Decree were intimated to

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Churches by some Divine Revelation. But now no Church; the very Church of Rome not excepted, is endued by God with any such Privilege: or if any Church should pretend thereto, it ought to produce its Patent for it. (2.) The same is evinc'd by all the Churches that have been in the World: The very *Jewish* Church was not only tainted with Idolatry, but afterwards condemn'd our Saviour as a Blasphemer, and rejected his Gospel. Several Christian Churches, even in the times of the Apostles, stain'd the Sincerity of their Faith by various Errors; of which kind were the Churches of *Corinth*¹, *Galatia*², and the seven of *Asia*³. After the Apostolical Days arose several Sects, which broach'd very grievous Errors; such were the *Gnosticks*, *Marcionites*, *Manichees*, *Sabellians*, *Arians*, with a whole Shoal of Hereticks more. And at present the *Papists* and *Protestants* charging each other with Error, is a farther Proof of our Argument. Now if particular Churches may err, and have very frequently err'd, the Catholick Church consisting of those Parts may likewise err: The Nature being the same of the whole, as of the Parts.

Our second Argument is this: The Catholick Church, by the very Concession of the *Papists*, may err in Manners, therefore in Matters of Faith also. The Reason of the Consequence is, because an Error in Faith is less than that in Manners: since the former may only proceed from the Ignorance of the Understanding, but the other commonly arises from the Maliciousness of the Will. Add to this, that God usually takes away his Spirit from such Men, as appears from the Prayer of *David*, *Psal.* 51. 13, 14. who begs of God not to take away his Spirit from him for the sake of a Sin which he had committed. Now who can believe that they who are depriv'd of the Spirit are free from falling into Error? Nay, who would not rather think but that Men of such a wicked Practice, would soon be the Maintainers of very dangerous and erroneous Principles?

Arg. 2.

¹ 1 Cor. Ch. 11. & 15. ² Gal. Ch. 1, 3, & 5. ³ Rev. Ch. 2, & 3.

But

Arg. 3. But thirdly, the whole Church which represents may err, and consequently the Church represented, which, as the *Romanists* say, is bound to pay a blind Obedience to the former: and 'tis hardly possible, when the Governours of the Church unanimously maintain Errors, that private Persons can in any great number, or for any long time preserve themselves from being polluted by them. This Argument is so self-evident, that it needs no other Proof than what is deducible from the History of the Church in all times, and is farther evinc'd from daily Experience.

1 Tim. 3. However, the *Romanists* usually object some Places of Scripture, which we shall briefly examine, and rescue from their false Glosses of them. And first they urge the Words of the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3. 15. where the Church is stil'd the Pillar and Ground of the Truth. *Ans.* The Meaning of St. Paul in these Words is, that the true Church holds the Truth, or the true Doctrine of the Gospel; that this Truth is defended by the Church alone, and that by the Profession and Maintenance of the Church alone it is propagated and supported. For unless they who were to profess and propagate the Truth of the Gospel were true Believers, in a short time the Knowledg thereof would be extinct among Men: and 'tis upon this account that the Church is call'd the Pillar and Ground or Stay of Truth.

After what manner Christ governs the Church. Again they argue, that the Church is govern'd by Christ, as her Head and Spouse, and by the Holy Ghost as the Soul of it; therefore if the Church should err in Matters of Faith or Manners, the Error would be attributed to Christ and the Holy Ghost. *Ans.* There is no Consequence in this Argument: For Christ governs his Church by his Word, wherein there is no Error. This Word contains in it clearly and conspicuously all things necessary to Salvation, so that the Church cannot without its own fault be ignorant of any thing necessary to be believed or practis'd in order to Salvation. This is enough to clear Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost from the Imputation of any Error into which the Church may fall. But if the Church neglects this clear and sufficient Word, or being blinded by Prejudice and Passion, takes the false

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vernance of its Spouse.

S E C T. III.

Whether the Church may depart from the Faith.

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Next to what we have said concerning the Infalli-*The Questi-*
bility of the Church, it follows that we should en-*on stated.*
quire whether the true Church can ever depart from
the Profession of the true Faith, and be so far ob-
scur'd, as not to be any longer conspicuous. For the
due stating of this Question, 'tis to be noted, that in
the managing thereof against the *Romanists*, we do not
here speak of the Invisible, but Visible, nor of a
Particular, but of the Catholick Church. The Ques-
tion then is, whether the Catholick Church of Christ,
which outwardly professes the true Christian Faith
and Religion, may at any time wholly swerve from
this Profession, and be so far obscur'd, that in no
place any Congregations may be met with, who re-
tain this sincere Profession, so as to invite others to
join with them therein?

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What we ought to think of this Question may ea-*The true*
sily be seen from what was said in the foregoing Secti-*Opinion a-*
on. For therein we shewed, that not only one, but *bout it.*
all Churches might fall into Errors of Faith as well as
of Manners, and into such as were not only small,
but also of a very heinous nature: and when this hap-
pens, the whole Catholick Church revolts from the
Faith. For the proof of which Opinion, we shall pro-
duce the following Arguments.

In the first place we say, That, by the Confession *Prov'd by*
of the *Papists* themselves, all particular Churches *several Ar-*
may depart from the Faith and the genuine Pro-*guments.*
fession thereof: Therefore the Catholick Church *Arg. 1.*
consisting of such particular Churches, may likewise
do the same. Add to this, that (by their own Con-
fession) every one of the Faithful may, and many
of them do, very frequently depart from the true
Faith and the Profession of it. Besides, upon the
Death

Death of the Faithful, unbelieving and ungodly Persons may come into their place, who renouncing the Faith and Piety of their Ancestors, may also swerve from their Profession.

Arg. 2. Secondly, Before the coming of Christ at some times there were no visible Societies of Men who profess'd the true Religion and Worship of the True God: therefore the same may also happen after Christianity has been establish'd. The Antecedent of this Argument needs no farther Proof than the Consideration of the State of the Church in the several Periods of Time before Christ. The old World wholly revolted from God, whose true Worship was confin'd to the single Family of *Noah*. After him, *Abraham* and his House were the Worshipers of the true God, whilst the greatest part of the rest of the World were wholly given up to Idolatry. Nay, the *Jewish* Church, so highly favour'd by God himself, fell often into Idolatry under their Judges; and in the Times of *Elijah*, it was so universally corrupted, that the Prophet look'd upon himself as the only true Worshipper of God, who had not bow'd down his Knee to *Baal*. But during the *Babylonish* Captivity, and after it, where was the Splendor of that Church? Certainly it cannot be denied but that the face of the Church was for some time eclips'd as it were under a dark Cloud. As to the Consequence of our Argument, 'tis plain; since Men are the same inconstant Persons, and as subject to fall, as they were formerly: The Nature of true Religion is likewise the same now as it was then, repugnant to the Passions of Men, nay thwarting them more now than formerly.

Arg. 3. But thirdly, it is foretold by the Holy Ghost that the Church under the New Testament should depart from the Faith. Remarkable to this purpose is *2 Theff. 2.* where is foretold that great Defection under the Man of Sin, which should precede the Coming of our Lord: and *Rev. 13. 8.* all the Inhabitants of the Earth, whose Names are not written in the Book of Life, are said to worship the Beast. Now these things do not denote any particular, but an universal Defection, which the *Papists* themselves believe shall be in the Days of Antichrist: For then the Church shall be

be forc'd upon the account of very grievous Persecutions to lie hid in the Wilderness: which is intimated Rev. 12. 5, 6. by the Similitude of a Woman, who should bring forth a Male Child, and should fly into the Wilderness by reason of the Dragon's Cruelty. The Event has prov'd the Truth of these Predictions: For many Churches, planted by the Apostles themselves, fell away to *Mahometanism* in *Asia*, as did several others in *Africa*. In the times of *Athanasius* almost whole Christendom was tainted with *Arianism*: Not to mention the Errors, Superstitions and Idolatry with which the Purity of the Church was corrupted in latter Ages, till the Reformation happen'd.

Let us now hear what the *Romanists* have to say in defence of their Opinion; and the Arguments they make use of as taken out of Scripture. In the first place they urge the Words of our Saviour, who Mat. 16. 18. promises that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against his Church. But what can be infer'd from this Place? 'Tis not here said that the Visible Church cannot fail, but only that the Gates of Hell shall not be able to prevail against the Church. But, say they, by Hell is to be understood the Devil, who has the Dominion over Hell; and by the Gates of Hell is meant the Power and Craftiness of the Devil. *Ans.* The Devil is never denoted by the word Hell or *Adms*, but always the Grave or Death, or the State of the Dead. So that the meaning of our Saviour's Words is, that Death shall not so far prevail over the true Believers, who properly constitute his Church, as to keep them under his Power for ever; but that they shall be rais'd again at the last day from Death to Life everlasting.

The Arguments of the Papists to the contrary examin'd.
Arg. 1. Taken from Mat. 16. 18.

Secondly, they urge the Promise of our Saviour, Arg. 2. Mat. 28. 20. *Lo I am with you always unto the End of the World.* *Ans.* He promises nothing here to the Church, but to the Apostles alone, whom our Saviour sent forth to preach the Gospel to all the World, that so they might with cheerfulness discharge the Function committed to them. To this they object, that the words, *to the end of the World*, prove that this Promise relates not only to the Apostles, but also to

Taken from Mat. 28. 20.

to

to their Successors. To this we reply, (1.) That the Words may be thus explained; I am with you till you have finish'd the Course of your Ministry, altho it should be to the End of the World. (2.) Let us suppose that these Words should relate to the Church; yet it cannot from thence be infer'd that the Church cannot fall, but only that it shall never happen through any defect of the Grace and Assistance of Christ.

Arg. 3. Thirdly, they argue from St. Paul's Words, *Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.* For here (say they) the Apostle teaches us, that those Ministers or Pastors and Teachers shall continue for the constant Edification of the Body of Christ, and consequently of the Visible Church, to the Day of Judgment. *Ans.* (1.) If they would urge this Place to any purpose, they might for the same reason conclude, that the Apostles and Prophets should be always in the Church; which is absurd. (2.) It is not promis'd that the Ministry of the Word should remain in its Purity in the Church to the End of the World: but 'tis only said, that it was instituted by Christ, to the end that the Faithful should by a Spiritual Bond be united to one another, and to Jesus Christ their Head. (3.) Here is no mention made of the Last Judgment, or of the End of the World; nor is it possible, since the Office of Apostles and Prophets has long since ceased in the Church: The Apostle only speaks of that Unity and Consummation of Faith, which had their Completion under the Gospel-Dispensation.

Arg. 4. Another Argument they deduce from those Places of Scripture, which inform us that the Kingdom of Christ should remain for ever, as *Psal. 89. 30, 38. Dan. 2. 44. Luke 1. 33.* Now the Kingdom of Christ is his true Church: But some few obscure and scatter'd Men, separate from, and unknown to each other, cannot be call'd his Kingdom, therefore it must be the Visible Church; and of this 'tis promis'd that it shall have no End. *Ans.* Those Texts do not inform us that our Saviour shall always have a Visible Kingdom here on Earth, but that his Empire shall be for ever, and not dissolv'd, as the Kingdoms of this World often are. But from the Eternity of the Empire or Heavenly Kingdom of Christ, it by no means follows, that

that he shall always have a Visible Church here upon Earth. For the Visible Church is not that Kingdom which Christ is said to hold for ever; but the Glory and Majesty to which he was advanc'd in Heaven by his Session at the Right Hand of God the Father; and this will be Eternal, tho the Church should fail here on Earth. For this his Kingdom does not depend on the Will of his Subjects, but on the Exaltation of God the Father.

It now remains that we should enquire whether the Invisible Church (which we have already prov'd to be a true Church) may err, and wholly depart from the Faith, so as that it may sometimes happen that no true Believers could be found. *Whether the Invisible Church may err.*

The Contra-Remonstrants, with whom we are chiefly concern'd in this Point, do usually distinguish between Errors destructive of the Fundamentals of Faith, and those which are not destructive thereof. Into the latter of these they readily grant that the Church may fall; but not into the former, because a true and saving Faith is inconsistent with them. Much less do they think it possible for the Invisible Church totally to depart from the Faith. This their Assertion is founded on the Opinion of the Perseverance of every one of the Faithful. For whereas they think it impossible for one who is a true Believer, and truly regenerated, to depart from the Faith, and relapse into his former wicked Course of Life again; from hence they infer that the true and invisible Church, which consists of such Believers, can neither fall into Errors destructive of the Fundamentals of Faith, nor wholly apostatize from it. *The Opinion of the Contra-Remonstrants.*

As for our parts, we maintain, the State and Condition of the Invisible Church, consisting only of true Believers, to be such, as that it may so far swerve from its Duty, as to fall not only into lesser, but even into such gross Errors as are destructive of the Faith, and may depart wholly from it, and the Profession thereof. This, tho it has never happen'd, yet is possible, as will appear by considering, that all and every of the Faithful may depart from the Faith, as we have already evinc'd, and consequently the whole Church, which consists of them. *Our Opinion about it confirm'd.*

But

*Objections
answer'd.*

But to this they make several Objections; telling us that this Opinion is repugnant to the Nature of the Mediatorial Office of Christ; and first, of his Kingly Office. For, say they, since the Church is the Kingdom of Christ, if that should wholly fail, Christ would be a King without a Kingdom. *Ans.* Christ cannot be divested of his Kingdom, tho his Subjects should turn Rebels, disown him, and go over to his Enemy: Because he can, and actually will exercise his Regal Authority by punishing the Disobedient and Rebellious. For the Kingdom of Christ is of a different nature from the Kingdoms of this World, whose Potentates may by their Rebellious Subjects be divested of their Crown and Dignity, and have nothing left them but the empty Name of King. Whereas Christ cannot be divested of his Kingdom, nor of his Regal and Coercive Authority, but he is always able to punish the Rebels as he thinks fit, and is a Lord even in the midst of his Enemies. We may more truly say that Christ is rob'd of his Kingdom here on Earth, when, as 'tis maintain'd by some, he keeps his Subjects to their Obedience by such an irresistible Power, as destroys the very Notion of free Obedience, without which there can be no true Subject of Christ: For there can be no King unless his Subjects be a FREE People.

They add, that the Priestly Office of Christ would suffer a prejudice, if at any time it should happen that there was no Church here on Earth. For the Functions of that Office are two; Oblation, by which they who are sanctified obtain everlasting Redemption; and Intercession, by which it comes to pass that the Faith rais'd in the Minds of the Redeemed by the Preaching of the Word and the Energy of the Spirit, is increas'd and preserv'd. Neither of these, say they, can be effected, if at any time there should happen any Interruption in the Church. *Ans.* This Objection is founded on the same Principle with the former, viz. that Christ was made a Priest only, that he might infallibly bring the Elect to eternal Salvation, all others being excluded from the Benefits of his Sacerdotal Office. But this Principle being false, the Argument founded thereon falls of it self. For Christ by his

his Priestly Office did not obtain Faith and Perseverance for us, but Remission of Sins, to be applied to us by a true Faith. The Virtue then of Christ's Intercession and Oblation is perpetual, since the Father upon his account is so far reconcil'd to all Men in general, that having establish'd a New Covenant with them, he offers them the Remission of all past Sins, and Eternal Life, provided they believe in his Son, and lead godly Lives.

Lastly, they tell us, that our Doctrine is destructive of the Prophetical Office of Christ; because the Preaching of the Gospel, so far as it concerns the Conversion of Men, is so order'd by the Dispensation of the secret Providence of God, that wherever the Gospel is preach'd, there should be some of the Elect, over whom the Ministry of the Spirit has an Influence: But that this Dispensation is wholly subverted, if it be suppos'd that it might happen that at one time or other there should not be so much as one Believer on the face of the Earth. *Ans.* This is grounded on the same erroneous Principle. We deny that there are any Elect consider'd as destitute of Faith. God indeed provides that the Word should be preach'd unto Men for their Conversion, but it does not necessarily convert them. The Faith or Infidelity of Men is such an Event as is to be distinguish'd from the Operation of the Word; yet so as that Faith is such an Event as corresponds to the Operation of the Word, whereas Infidelity is repugnant thereto.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Tokens or Characteristical Marks of the CHURCH.

Among the Attributes of the Church, are reckon'd the *No Marks* Characteristical Marks of it; which are certain external *of the In-* Signs that are obvious to our Senses, by which we come *visible* to the knowledg of some hidden thing. These are *Church.* either necessary or contingent, either common or proper: But 'tis only those which are necessary and proper that are to be enquir'd after with respect to the Church.

Church. Whereas we before divided the Church into Visible and Invisible, the Tokens of both may be demanded. But of the Invisible Church there can be no necessary Marks assign'd, but only such as are contingent; viz. the pure Profession of the Doctrine of Christ, and Actions conformable to such a Profession. Whereas therefore Faith and Piety may be dissimul'd, and a Confession made contrary to the Intention of the Person who makes it, such Tokens cannot be sufficient Demonstrations of the Invisible Church; since 'tis God's Property alone to know them that are his.

A Question concerning the Marks of the Visible Church.

'Tis demanded then what are the Marks or Tokens of the Visible Church. But whereas the Profession of the Christian Doctrine is a clear and full Indication thereof, and distinguishes the Church of Christ from all others, 'tis superfluous to trouble one's head in searching after other Tokens thereof. But however 'tis demanded whether there be not at present some sensible Marks, by which we may know, whether the Divine Truth is held by Christians, or by *Jews*, or by *Mahometans*, or by Pagans; moreover, what Congregations of Christians hold the Doctrine of Christ uncorrupted, and what Congregations have deviated from it? *Answ.* He that enquires after those Marks, either knows what is the saving Truth, the Profession whereof makes a true Visible Church; or he does not know it, but looks after such Marks, by which he may discern which is the true Church, and consequently by the knowledg thereof may attain likewise to the knowledg of the saving Truth. Now by the very Nature and Definition of a Token or Sign, it is evident, that only such Marks ought to be enquir'd after, which are more evident than the things they denote. Since therefore both the *Papists* and *Contra-Remonstrants* maintain that there are Marks of a true Church, 'tis necessary that they should give us such Tokens, by which we may discern which is the true Church, before we can discern which is the saving Truth.

None given to shew which is the true Church,

As for our parts, we deny that there are any such Marks. We own indeed that Miracles are Tokens of the true Church, that the Doctrine confirm'd by them is Divine, and to be credited: and hence it is that by

Church into the Conviction of Miracles we believe the Gospel Church, to
 may be de preached by the Apostles to be Divine. But whether one who is
 can be n any Miracles were wrought for the Confirmation of ignorant of
 are con any particular Doctrine in dispute among Christians, the Truth.
 &trine o who own the Gospel to be Divine, we shall enquire
 rofeffion more hereafter. At present we say that there are no
 ssembl'g such Tokens of a Church, as we formerly describ'd :
 on of th and this our Notion we maintain in the general by the
 sufficien following Argument, viz. That the Marks which are
 since 't affign'd either by the *Papists* or the *Contra-Remon-*
 his. strants, are either really not such Tokens as we require,
 e Token but the thing it self in debate ; or else such as suit
 fession o with a false as well as with a true Church ; or which
 ndication do not suit with them alone, but are common to all
 rift from Christians, or else such as they falsely pretend to.

As for the *Contra-Remonstrants*, they assign two prin- The Con-
 cipal Marks of the true Church, viz. the pure Preach- tra-Re-
 ing and Reception of the Word of God, and the due mon-
 Adminiftration of the Sacraments ; to which they strants
 add a third, viz. the executing of Ecclesiastical Disci- Notion
 pline according to the Institution of Christ. Without examin'd.
 taking notice of their odd way of dividing what may
 be comprehended under one Head, we thus argue a-
 gainst what they advance. (1.) The Signs ought to
 be more known than the Thing signified : But an Infidel
 is as much at a loss to know what the pure Preaching
 of the Gospel is, as what the true Church is ; because
 the Church cannot be true, unless the Truth, or the
 Word of God be purely taught and receiv'd in it. When
 they therefore enquire which are the Marks of a true
 Church, they are apt to ask, How can we know that the
 pure Preaching of the Word of God, the Adminiftra-
 tion of the Sacraments, &c. be in such or such a Con-
 gregation ? (2.) The Marks ought to be distinct from
 the Thing denoted ; whereas 'tis one and the same thing
 to enquire which is the true Church, as 'tis to ask
 where the Gospel is preach'd and receiv'd in its Purity.
 (3.) There may be a true Church, where neither the
 Word of God is preach'd, nor any Sacraments duly
 administred ; because true Faith may be wrought in
 the Heart by the private Reading of the Word :

otherwise it must be said, that where these are wanting, there the Visible Church is wholly extinct.

*The Popish
Marks of a
true Church
examin'd.*

*Mark 1.
The Title
Catholick.*

But to pass by these less considerable Matters, we proceed to take into examination the several Marks of a true Church, which the *Romanists*, and particularly *Bellarmino*, has assign'd; and they amount to fifteen.

Their first Mark is the Title of Catholick. *Answer* 'Tis very trifling from a Title which every Man claims to himself, to conclude that he is such an one as his Title imports, since he may falsely assume it to himself. For 'tis very usual, when the thing it self is chang'd still to retain the Name. Nor does this Note suit with the Primitive Church, since that of Christian is more convenient, as being more antient than the word Catholick.

*2d Mark,
Antiquity.*

The second Mark of a true Church assign'd by *Bellarmino*, is *Antiquity*; to which we answer, (1.) That the Antiquity of the Church is not to be sought after properly in the Antiquity of the Men who constitute it, since they are constantly upon the Remove, and others succeed the Dead: Nor is it to be sought after in the Antiquity of Temples and Sees wherein they teach, since even in these a new Doctrine may be broach'd; but it is to be found in the Antiquity of the Doctrine. The Doctrine therefore must first be known before any judgment can be pass'd on the Antiquity of it: But whereas this cannot be done by every one of the Vulgar, but only by the most Learned; this is not the Mark by which we come to the knowledge of the true Church. (2.) That Church which is now Antient, was once New. (3.) Antiquity alone does not make a true Church; for then a Lye might by degrees be chang'd into Truth. (4.) The Pagan Religion is of an older date than Christianity, and likewise usually urges its Antiquity in its own defence. (5.) True Antiquity is to be sought after in the Holy Scripture, and in the Congruity of the Doctrine therewith. If we depart from thence in our Searches, it will be a hard matter to judg of the Antiquity and Priority of Doctrines, especially when we read that the Tares and Wheat both grow'd up together, and appear'd at the same time.

A third Mark assign'd is the perpetual and uninterrupted Duration of the Church. *3d Mark, an uninterrupted Duration.* *Answ.* That the Duration of any Assembly of Men, consider'd apart from its Doctrine, cannot constitute a true Church, appears from the Congregations of the Heathens, *Jews, Greeks,* and others. The Duration then ought to be sought after in the Truth of the Doctrine. Nor will this Note (by the *Papists* own Confession) suit with the Church of *Rome* in the Times of Antichrist. At least no judgment can be made of this Token till the End of the World: since the Church, which continued hitherto, may in process of Time fall away, and suffer an Interruption.

Their fourth Mark is the Multitude and Variety of *4th Mark, the Multitude of Believers.* Believers, from whence 'tis stil'd Catholick, because it holds that which was believ'd at all Times, in all Places, and by all Persons. *Answ.* (1.) At first the Church did not consist of such a Multitude of Men, nor did it in the Times of the *Arian* Heresy, nor will it when Antichrist comes. (2.) The Church is truly stil'd Catholick, as it is dispers'd over several Parts of the Earth, in opposition to *Judaism*, which was confin'd to one single Corner of the World, viz. the Land of *Canaan*: But not with respect to the *Gentiles, Mahometans,* and the rest of the unbelieving part of Mankind, which are by far the greater Number. Much less can the Church of *Rome* be stil'd Catholick in opposition to the other Christian Churches, which are separated from her Communion, such as the *Grecians, Armenians, Ethiopians,* and *Protestants*, which greatly exceed the *Papists* in number.

Their fifth Mark of a Church, is the continued and uninterrupted Succession of Bishops from the Apostles *5th Mark, the Succession of Bps.* down to our Times. *Answ.* (1.) The Succession of Persons without the Doctrine, is no more an indication of a true than of a false Church. But the Succession of Doctrine cannot be known, unless upon a strict Enquiry, and comparing it with the Doctrine of the Apostles. (1.) A Succession of Persons may be in false Churches, as in the *Jewish*, when they crucified our Saviour: and of this the *Arians* of old boasted, as do the *Greeks, Armenians* and *Abyssines* at present.

6th Mark, A sixth Mark is the Agreement in Doctrine with the Antient Church. *Ans.* If by the Doctrine of the antient Church they mean the Doctrine of the Apostles, which is truly antient, we allow of this Mark : but this will not be discernible to any, but to those who have enquir'd after the saving Doctrine of the Apostles. If they mean the Church which immediately succeeded the Apostolical Age, this Mark is very uncertain ; because there are few of their Writings extant, who liv'd in the Primitive Times, and consequently we cannot from them deduce any judgment concerning the Doctrine of the whole Church. In after-Ages the Writers publish'd so many Volumes, that it would take up more than a Man's whole Life to peruse them, and consequently it would cost him abundance of Pains to no purpose in enquiring after this Mark of a true Church.

7th Mark, Their seventh Mark is the Union of the Members betwixt themselves, and with the Head. *Ans.* (1.) There is an Union between very bad Persons, and even between false Religions, such as *Mahometism* and *Judaism* ; since all Churches, tho divided from others, are united among themselves. Nor (2.) is every Difference in Congregations to be reckon'd as the Token of a false Church ; 'tis enough if they all agree in the Fundamentals. Nor have the *Romanists* any reason to brag of their Union, when there are as many Differences among them as there are between *Protestants*. The *Dominicans* and *Franciscans* quarrel one with another about the Conception of the Blessed Virgin : and particularly the *Jesuits* and *Sorbonists* cannot agree about the Pope's Infallibility, nor whether the Supreme Authority be lodg'd in the Council, or in the Pope. Nay, there have been notorious Schisms in the Church of *Rome*, when there have been two, nay three Popes at a time : and then where was their so much boasted Union ?

8th Mark, The eighth Mark of a true Church assign'd by the *Romanists* is the Sanctity of its Doctrine. *Ans.* (1.) This Sanctity is not any thing external, therefore no judgment can be made of it, till the Doctrine be first discovered. (2.) Nor is the Doctrine of the *Papist* Church so holy as they pretend : since many Superstitions

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perfections are introduc'd, which never were commanded by our Saviour; and some Tenets held by them, which open a door to the greatest Enormities. Of this nature we may reckon their Doctrine of Indulgences; as also that by which they have declar'd it lawful for a Prince to punish Hereticks, notwithstanding he has given them Passports of Safety; That the Pope has a Power of absolving his Subjects from their Oaths of Allegiance, if their Kings favour Hereticks, or are disobedient to the Church; and that Marriages may be contracted within the Degrees of Consanguinity prohibited by the Laws of God.

Their ninth Mark is the Efficacy of the Doctrine: *9th Mark, the Efficacy of the Doctrine.* which as formerly in the Apostolical Age was propagated over the whole Earth in a short time, by Men in all outward appearance very contemptible; so at present it is propagated in their Church, but not in the Jewish, Lutheran, or Calvinist Church. *Ans.* We own that the Efficacy of the Gospel is of great weight to prove the Authority thereof: tho we cannot forbear admiring at the unfair Dealing of the *Papists*. They would not have the Divine Authority of the Scriptures to be prov'd by the Efficacy of its Doctrine, but maintain, that it depends on the Testimony of the Church: and when the Truth or Divinity of the Church is to be defended, they argue from the Efficacy of the Doctrine. For if that Efficacy be an Argument of the Truth of a Church which professes that Doctrine, it must certainly be much more so of the Truth of the Doctrine it self. However, a Doctrine may be Divine, tho there be no Efficacy discernible in it; since it does not operate without the Intervention of Man's Will. If therefore it should be preach'd to Men obstinately wicked, it will not have such an Effect, as appears from several Passages of Scripture¹. Nay, there may be some Efficacy even in a false Doctrine, because it is more grateful to Flesh and Blood, as may be seen in many Impostors², particularly in the Doctrine of *Mahomet*.

¹ Isa. 53. 1. John 12. 37, 38. Acts 13. 45, &c. & 28. 24, &c. ² 2 Thess. 2. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2. Mat. 24. 4, 5. Rev. 13. 8, 13, &c.

10th
Mark, the Holy
Lives of
the first
Authors of
the Roman
Catholick
Religion.

A tenth Mark is the Holy Lives of the Authors, or first Fathers of the *Roman* Catholick Religion; by whom they mean the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Apostles, the Primitive Fathers who opposed themselves against several Heresies, and the Institutors of the Religious Orders. *Answ.* (1.) We acknowledg no other Author of our Religion but the Lord Jesus, of which the Apostles were the Preachers. The Holiness of their Lives is indeed of great force to prove the Truth of Christianity in the general; but not that it is retained in greater Purity by one Sect than by another. Therefore this Mark belongs in common to all those who have embrac'd the Gospel. (2.) As for the Holiness of the other Teachers of the Church, no Man can be infallibly assured thereof; since 'tis God alone that can search the Hearts, and can know whether the inward Intention be answerable to the outward Performance. As for the Institutors of Religious Houses, many of them were more superstitious than holy, placing the height of Perfection in bodily Exercises. Nay, some of them were bloody and cruel Persecutors, of which number we may reckon *Dominick* the Inventor of the Inquisition. But why is there no mention made of the Holiness of the Popes, who are the Head of the Church? Because, by the History of them, the Profaneness and Wickedness of their Lives is but too manifest. If therefore we were to judg of the whole Body of the Church by the HEAD of it, we may well conclude their Church to be the worst Church in the whole World.

11th
Mark, the
Glory of
Miracles.

Their eleventh Mark of a true Church, is the Glory of Miracles; and that these are necessary to persuade a Man to embrace a new Faith, they prove from the Example of *Moses*, of Christ, and of his Apostles, as also from Reason. Because he who is sent, ought to produce some Testimony of his Mission: now, say they, there can be no other evidence of the Divine Mission besides Miracles; and that these are sufficient, they evince from the Impossibility of their being wrought, but by the Power of God, and that he cannot attest to a Falshood. That their Catholick Church has in all Ages been eminent for Miracles, and that of late *Francis Xavier* and others have excel'd therein, whereas

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whereas *Jews, Turks, Infidels and Hereticks*, can boast of no true Miracles wrought by them. *Ans.* What they premise concerning Miracles, we freely own. But the *Papists* have no reason to require Miracles of the *Protestants*, since they do not pretend to announce any new Doctrine, but only to rescue that which was taught and confirm'd formerly by the Apostles with sufficient Miracles, from the many Errors with which it was corrupted. To this purpose Miracles were not necessary, but only an accurate Search into the Word of God, and reforming all things according to that Test. As to the Miracles pretended to by the *Papists*, we say, (1.) That those which were wrought by Christ and his Apostles, were done in confirmation, not of the superstitious Tenets of the *Romanists*, but of the Christian Religion in general. (2.) Many of those Miracles boasted of by the *Romanists*, are either feign'd, or not true Miracles; such as were done in a Corner, and not openly shew'd before Hereticks, as they are pleas'd to stile us *Protestants*. Nay, their Great *Xavier*, of whose Miracles they so much glory, was not endued with the best and most useful of Miracles, *viz.* the Gift of Tongues, without which he could not expect to preach the Gospel to any good purpose to the *Indians*.

Their twelfth Mark is the Light of Prophecy; and ^{12th} that this is the Sign of a true Church, they endeavour ^{Mark,} to prove from several Texts of Scripture; which ^{the Light} Token they say belongs to their Church, and not to ^{of Prophecy.} the Heathens, *Mahometans*, and Hereticks. *Ans.* We may make the same Reply to this, as we did to the former Article about Miracles; since Prophecy is a certain sort of Miracle. But for a more distinct Answer we say, that there is a twofold kind of Prophecy: One, by which the Commands of God, hitherto unknown, are declared unto Men; or by which the obscure Meaning of Scripture, especially of the Prophecies, is open'd by the instinct of the same Spirit by which they were dictated: The other, that by which things future are foretold. As to the former kind of

* Joel 2. 28, 29. Acts 2. 17, 18, 19. Is. 41. 23.

Prophecy, we own it to be requisite to the Preachers of any new Doctrine, but not to the Reformers of a corrupted Religion. The latter kind of Prophecy we own indeed to be the Gift of God, to whom alone it belongs to foreknow future Events, and who only can communicate the knowledge of them to Men. But this is not a certain and unquestionable Token of a true Teacher: (1.) Because we read that God sometimes granted this favour of foretelling things to come to false Prophets, particularly to *Baalam*'. (2.) Sometimes Men only give probable Guesses of future Events or receive it from a Familiarity with the Devil, who can from the Connection of Causes guess at what is likely to come to pass.

13th
Mark,
the Confes-
sion of Ad-
versaries.

Another Mark of the true Church, is the Confession of their Adversaries; and for the proving that this Sign belongs to their Church only, they tell us two things: First, that the very Adversaries of their Church the Heathens and *Protestants*, give great Commendations to their Doctors. Secondly, that no *Papish* Doctor ever commended any Heretick, or own'd that there was any thing commendable in him. *Ans.* This is a very ridiculous Mark; since (1.) Not those whom Men, but whom God commends, are worthy of Praise. (2.) It would from hence follow that the Church which had spiteful and ill-tongu'd Adversaries, was a false Church. Nor (3.) is it true, that the Adversaries of the Church of *Rome* do own the Truth of its Doctrine, but openly and avowedly oppose it. If there be any Persons who do acknowledg there are some good things still remaining in that Church amidst all their Superstitions and Corruptions, or have bestow'd Commendations on any Learned and Pious Writer of that Church, this their Ingenuity is to be commended: It being the part of an ingenuous Man to give due Praise to the Vertue of his very Enemies. (4.) But what *Bellarmino* alledges concerning the Heathens, affects the Christian Religion in general, and not as 'tis polluted with *Papish* Superstitions.

Their fourteenth Mark is the untimely Ends of those ^{14th} who have opposed their Church. *Ans.* (1.) An un-^{Mark, the} timely Death is no Argument of the Fallity of any ^{untimely} Doctrine, nor of any Man's being less acceptable to ^{End of the} God: for then what shall we say of that Army of ^{Enemies} Martyrs who suffer'd in defence of the Christian Re-^{of the} ligious? (2.) The Opposers of the Church, mention'd ^{Church.} by *Bellarmino*, were such as did not oppose the *Popish* Church, but Christianity in general. (3.) The new Reformers did not come to so miserable a Death as he relates, for he is too credulous in this Matter, and takes things upon Trust. (4.) Some of the *Papists*, nay of the Popes themselves, the Head of the Church, have come to an untimely End, as is evident from the Histories of the *Popish* Writers.

Their last Mark is the Temporal Felicity bestow'd ^{15th} by God on the Defenders of the Church. *Ans.* This Mark, is as uncertain a Mark as the former. For (1.) the ^{the tempo-} Example of *Josiah* is a sufficient Proof, that the De-^{ral Felici-} fenders of the true Church are not always happy. ^{ty of the} (2.) The Scripture teaches us, that the Good are ra-^{Defenders} ther afflicted, whilst it fares well with the Wicked ^{of it.}. (3.) The good things of this World fall oftner to the share of the Ungodly, than of the Godly, as *St. John* informs us *. (4.) The Heathens were us'd to urge the same Mark against the Primitive Christians. (5.) The *Romanists* cannot urge this against the *Mahometans*, who have been, and still are in possession of a great part of Christendom.

* 2 Kings 23. 29. * John 15. 20. & 16. 33. * Rom. 8. 29. * 1 John 2. 15, 16.

C H A P. V.

Of the Duty of the Members of the Church.

*The Duties
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HAVING hitherto treated of the Ministers, by whose Ministry God first of all gather'd, and at present preserves the Church, as also of the Church in general, with its several Divisions and characteristical Marks; it now remains that we enquire into the Duty of the Members of the Church, or the Faithful, as they are the constituent Parts thereof.

1. To meet Now this Duty consists of several Particulars. As first, they ought to meet together in Religious Assemblies to the Glory of God, and there to make a publick Profession of their Faith: Because God ought to be glorified not only with the Heart, but also in Word and Deed¹. This we thought fit to observe in opposition to those, who, depreciating this outward Worship, think that God is sufficiently worshipped by the Mind only; and that this external Profession, as not being essential to Religion, may sometimes when occasion requires be omitted.

The Necessity of it. This erroneous Opinion we refuted elsewhere; and at present say that 'tis the Duty of Christians, to constitute an Assembly of Believers; which we evince by the following Arguments. (1.) Because the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ; but this Construction of a Body does not appear, unless in a Congregation, wherein is properly that Bond, by which many Members are united into one and the same Body. (2.) Under the Old Testament there were Religious Assemblies, viz. every Sabbath day in their Synagogues². Nay, the very Heathen by the Light of Nature were instructed to set apart some solemn Times for the publick Worship of even their false Gods. Much more ought Christians to hold such Assemblies for the pub-

¹ Rom. 10. 10. ² Acts 15. 21.

lick Performance of a more perfect Worship. (3.) We have an exprefs Command for holding fuch Affemblies; and the Reason added why we ought not to forfake them, becaufe the Day of Judgment is at hand¹. (4.) The fame is evinc'd by the very end for which thofe Affemblies were appointed; which is manifold: Firft, That the Divine Truth fhould thereby be preferv'd and propagated. Secondly, That Prayers and Thanksgivings fhould be offer'd to God, which are of greater force when offer'd up with one confent by a whole Congregation, than by a private Perfon. Thirdly, That the Faithful fhould be put in mind to be constant, and to make a farther Progrefs in Faith and Vertue, provoking one another to Love and good Works². Fourthly, that the Memory of our Lord's Death fhould be folemnly celebrated by the Adminiftration of his laft Supper, whereby we own a crucified Jesus to be our Lord, and maintain Union and Communion with him and the Members of his Body. Fifthly, That Difcipline may be exercis'd toward Delinquents, who grieve the Church by their Offences; as well for the reclaiming them, as for the rendring others more cautious, and afham'd to offend. Laftly, this is confirm'd by the Practice of the Apoftles, and the Chriftians of all following Ages, whom the fevereft Edicts, and moft cruel Torments could not deter from meeting together in their Affemblies and Congregations.

But here it may be ask'd, whether this be the Duty of all, even of the moft approv'd Chriftians? *Ans^r. A Query answer'd.* Yes, no man is exempted from it. For if any fhould except the Approved, it will be immediately ask'd, Who they are, and who fhall judg thereof? If the Perfon himfelf, then every one will foon pronounce himfelf to be of that number: If another muft be the Judg, he will often meet with Contradictions, efpecially if he fhould pronounce a Man approv'd who is not fo. But fuppoſing them to be fo far approv'd, as to have attain'd a more ſolid and perfect Knowledg of the Chriftian Religion; yet 'tis their Duty in a more efpe-

¹ Heb. 10. 24, 25.

² Ibid. 24.

cial manner to meet together in Religious Assemblies (1.) Because all the Duties aforementioned have a peculiar relation to them, and may best be performed by them. (2.) Because no Man is so far experienced as to be wise enough for himself in every thing; but he stands in need of the Instruction and Admonition of others. (3.) They may by their Example excite others, who have less knowledg, to frequent the Congregations, that thereby they may receive that Instruction which is highly necessary for them.

2. *Due respect and Obedience to their Teachers.*

Another Duty is to pay a due Respect and Obedience to their Ministers and Teachers, and to pray for them; since they are appointed by Christ to watch over, and to give an account of the Souls committed to their charge. Hence it is that we ought not to credit every slanderous Report that is rais'd of them, but to submit to them in every thing they command which is agreeable to God's Word.

3. *To contribute towards all necessary Expences.*

A third Duty incumbent on the Members of the Church is, freely and cheerfully to contribute towards the Expences that are necessary for the promoting of the Divine Truth. To this purpose they ought in the first place to make a necessary provision for their Pastors. For since they lay aside all those Arts and Trades by which the Men of the World get a Livelihood, and devote themselves wholly to Sacred Studies, and the Edification of their Flock, 'tis highly reasonable that their Hearers should impart to them of their Carnal things, who partake of their Spiritual things. Secondly, they ought to contribute towards the building of Churches and Places dedicated to the Worship of God, as also toward the maintaining of publick Schools for the training up of Youth in the study of holy things, and towards the supplying of the Poor with things necessary.

C H A P.

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C H A P. VI.

Of Church-Discipline.

Hitherto we have consider'd the Duty of every particular Member of the Church, and are next to enquire, if any Men fail in their Duty, or offend against the Precepts of Jesus Christ, what Course the Church ought to take against such. This by a commonly receiv'd Name is call'd Ecclesiastical Discipline, which consists in these two Acts: (1.) In a brotherly and mutual Admonition, Reproof and Correction of those who shall have fallen into any enormous Sin, that they may timely repent. Or (2.) if at any time those who are admonish'd, obstinately persevere in their Sins without any Signs of Repentance, then all Converse with them ought to be avoided.

Before Admonition and Reproof can be rightly applied, a certain knowledge of the Offence ought to be had. For either 'tis taken for granted that some have sinned, or else 'tis doubtful and uncertain. In the latter case the Sinner ought to be convicted by proper Witnesses or other Arguments, before any Reproof can be us'd. But here there is need of great Prudence and Caution, lest an innocent Person suffer Censure. Therefore it ought to be consider'd against whom, and when the Accusation is to be allow'd of, and by what Method one ought to enquire after an unknown Crime.

In the admitting of any Accusation, the Apostle has taught us that some Distinction of Persons ought to be observ'd. *Against an Elder* (says he, 1 Tim. 5. 19.) *receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses.* The meaning of which Words is not that an Elder cannot be conven'd privately, unless he can be convinc'd of any Crime by two or three Witnesses (for if he has committed any Offence, he ought to be admonish'd of it in order to his Amendment; and if falsely accus'd, then to clear his Reputation from the Calumny.)

Calumny.) But that no Person who accuses a Presbyter before the College of Presbyters, which exercise Discipline in behalf of the whole Church, ought to be heard, unless he can prove his Accusation by two or three Witnesses. But against another Person, tho' the Accuser has no Witnesses, he may be so far heard as that farther Enquiry be made, whether the Truth of the Charge can be found out by any Indications, or by the Confession of the Person who is guilty. The Reason why such a difference should be allow'd between a Presbyter and any other Person, is this, lest if any Accusation should be lightly admitted of against a Presbyter, his Authority would be lessen'd, and his Ministry rendered useles and ineffectual.

*The Abuse
of the Pa-
pists in this
matter.*

However, it cannot be deny'd but the Papists very shamefully abuse this Prerogative, since the Clergy by their Decrees seem to have aim'd at nothing else but a Licence for, and an Impunity in sinning. For tho' they are under the Protection of a Christian Magistrate, yet they do not allow him any Authority of enquiring into, or punishing the Offences of an Ecclesiastick; but exempting all the Clergy from the secular Power, they receive the Charge before their own Tribunal, and have sometimes decreed to receive no Accusation but what was attested by seven Witnesses; that so the Clergy might, if possible, be freed from all Censures. Whereas we maintain that no Person whatsoever that transgresseth the Civil Laws, be he Laick or Ecclesiastick, is exempted from the Cognizance and Punishment of the Civil Magistrate.

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The inquiry into any Offence ought to be made according to the Custom usually observ'd in a just and equitable Judgment. When the Charge is once read, then the Person charg'd is to be heard in his own Defence; and if he plead Not guilty, the Evidence of Witnesses must be consider'd, and the Party charg'd be suffer'd to make his Replication thereto. But above all, in such an Enquiry great care ought to be taken that we fall not into those Faults which render us incapable of sincerely discovering the Truth; such as, (1.) Prejudice, whether conceived against the Person accusing or accused. (2.) Acceptation of Persons, by which we are apt to judg according as our Love

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our Hatred is. (3.) Rashness or Precipitancy, in passing a Judgment without duly weighing all the Circumstances of the Matter, and the Arguments by which the Crime may be prov'd or excus'd. But if after such an unprejudic'd Enquiry the Offence remains still doubtful, no farther Censure can be pass'd upon it; since in dubious Cases 'tis always best to take the mildest Course. However, 'tis not improper to use some friendly Admonition to the Person accus'd, desiring him to lead a Life so unblamable and upright, that he may be free not only from Sin, but even from the Appearance of it.

But when the Offence is notorious, either by the Reprehension of the Party guilty, or upon a due Enquiry into the matter of Fact, then Reproof is to be us'd, but to be temper'd variously, according to the difference of Persons and Crimes.

With respect to Persons: For, (1.) Some are of a more obstinate nature, and are for defending their Sins, as if they had done nothing amiss. These are to be convinc'd and sharply reprov'd out of the Word of God. Others, on the contrary, acknowledg their Faults, bemoan themselves, promise Amendment, and beg for Pardon; and these are to be treated with the Spirit of Meekness, exhorted to Repentance, and encourag'd thereto by the Hopes of the Remission of their Sins.

(2.) The various Tempers of Men ought to be regarded; some are of a more generous Spirit, and these ought to be treated mildly, rather shewing them the Heinousness of their Sins, than sharply rebuking them. Others are of a more servile Temper, who are to be manag'd more roughly, and terrified with the Threatnings of Divine Wrath. (3.) Regard ought to be had to their Age, the Aged being to be reprov'd after another manner than what is us'd to the younger sort. But (4.) and lastly, the greatest regard ought to be had to the Dignity of the Persons; for Magistrates and Princes ought to be treated in a different manner from Persons in a private Capacity.

With respect to their Crimes: (1.) Some are private, and known but to a few, or cannot be discover'd to many without the Disgrace of the Offender; or else this Crime has been but single and not habitual, and in

this Case the Reproof ought to be us'd privately. (2.) Other Sins are notoriously known by many, or the Sinners when privately admonish'd have notwithstanding persever'd in their Crimes, or else would not acknowledg and repent of their Fault; or are of such a Disposition as to be mov'd with many, more than with one or few Persons: in which Case the Reproof must be applied by and before a great many at once that so the Sinner may be the more forcibly reclaim'd to his Duty.

The second is avoiding the Conversation of the Obstinate.

After all these means us'd by the Church, if the Sinner continue obstinate, and shew no Signs of Repentance, but remains incurable, then the other Act of Ecclesiastical Discipline takes places, viz. the avoiding of, or separating from such a Person. Thus the Apostle; *We command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly.* And again he advertises the *Corinthians*; *Not to keep company, with any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Carnal, or a Jeweller, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat.* But for the more distinct handling of this Point, we will briefly enquire from whence this took its Rise, and for what purpose it was introduc'd into the Church, which will give us a Light into the true Use of it.

The Origin of Excommunication from the Jews.

This Separation or Excommunication seems to have been instituted in imitation of the *Jews*. During the *Babylonish Captivity*, while they were under a Foreign Power, and could not exercise their Judgments in Criminal Cases according to the Law of *Moses*, a certain Separation was introduc'd, by which the obstinate Offenders were kept within the Compass of their Duty. The first mention we have of it is *Ezr. 10. 8.* where 'tis said, *That whosoever would not come within three days, according to the Counsel of the Princes and Elders, all his Substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the Congregation of those that had been carried away.* There were two Degrees of the Punishment, the first of which was called *Niddui*, or Excommunication, the Effect whereof was that the

Delinquent should be deprived of the Liberty of freely conversing with others, till upon repenting of his Fault he should be absolved from the Sentence of Excommunication. This Excommunication extended to thirty days at most; and if the Person did not repent in that time, another thirty days were allowed him; but if in that Space he did not repent, he was anathematiz'd with solemn Imprecations and Execrations. After this, he was secluded from almost all Converse with Men; nay, sometimes he was shut up in a little Cottage where he might be fed, and no Man allowed to come near him, unless it were to give him Sustenance.

From these things 'tis plain, that this whole Rite of Excommunication among the *Jews* was not deriv'd from the Law of *Moses*, but was merely of Human Institution. In the Law there are indeed some things, in imitation whereof this Practice was introduced. For there is mention made sometimes of the *Anathema* or *Cherem*, but manifestly in another sense: Since the Person or his Estate destin'd to Destruction by solemn Execration was called *Anathema*. In this sense the word *Cherem* is often to be met with, especially in that noted Passage, *Josh. 6. 17.* relating to *Jericho*. From such an Act as this, Excommunication seems afterwards to have been deriv'd: For as in *Cherem*, taken in Scripture for a Punishment, a Curse was us'd, which included Destruction in it; so in Excommunication *Cherem* was the Malediction, and an Imprecation of the Divine Vengeance, making it unlawful for any to have to do with an excommunicated Person.

From hence it appears, that it was a Civil and External, but not an Ecclesiastical Punishment: for it was not inflicted by the Priest, neither were the Parties offending excluded from the Temple or their Synagogues, nor from celebrating the Festivals, especially that of the Passover. But there was this Difference in those who entred the Temple; the Excommunicated Persons went in at the Door on the Left Hand, and came out again at that of the Right; whilst others entred the Temple at the Door on the Right Hand, and fetching a Circuit came out at the Left.

Imitated
in the
Church of
Christ.

The Christian Church, which freely observ'd all the laudable Customs of the Synagogue, especially such as tended to the promoting of Piety, did in some measure make use of this Rite of Separation and *Anathema*, thereby the better to keep its Followers within the Bounds of their Duty. This Practice was the more easily introduc'd, because the whole Church at first consisted of *Jews*, or Profelytes of Righteousness, who being accustomed to this Discipline, were the more ready to submit to it. Afterwards when the Faith was propagated among other Nations, the same Discipline prevail'd among them also; not indeed in all things agreeing with the *Jewish*, but somewhat altered as to its Use and Design, and temper'd with greater Humanity according as the Genius of the Christian Religion requir'd. If any one professing the Faith should live ungodlily, we are commanded by the Apostolical Institutions to avoid him, *i. e.* to break off all Familiarity with him; but yet not so as to have any Conversation with him, since he ought to be admonish'd to repent: And this avoiding seems to have some Affinity to the *Niddui* or Separation among the *Jews*. But if no good can be done by this means, nor the Sinner be brought to Repentance, he was declared to be excommunicated, debar'd from the Communion of the Lord's-Supper, and publickly rejected from being a Member of Christ.

Difference
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Difference
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But there was this Difference between the Christian and the *Jewish* Excommunication, that a Sinner thus excommunicated was not avoided in a familiar living together, as among the *Jews*; but was only reputed as an Alien to the Church, and convers'd with as such.

That we may the more distinctly treat of this Discipline, a Distinction must be made between the Power which oblige Men to Obedience. One is External, which relates to the outward Form of Church-Government and as far as it obliges to Obedience, is executed by the Magistrate. The other is Internal, which by the Ministry of the Word inclines the Will to obey; and this is in God's hands alone, and is properly Spiritual.

Again, a Distinction ought to be made of the different State of the Church; for either it is under the Care, Protection and Defence of a Christian Magistrate

strate, who erects publick Churches for the Performance of Religious Worship: Or else it is under one who is no Christian, but a Persecutor; or who will take no care of the Church, but leaves it to provide for its own Welfare. In the first Case we say, that the Church may institute such a Form of Discipline as is agreeable to the Word of God; but then it cannot have the Force of a Law without the Approbation of the Christian Magistrate, who is the Protector and Defender of the Church. If the Magistrate takes no Care of the Church, then the Faithful may by mutual Consent enact such Laws, to which all shall be bound to submit, may place over themselves certain Governors, and by a voluntary Subjection oblige themselves to obey them. But all those things, so far as they include a certain External Jurisdiction properly so call'd, and denote a coercive Power, are not Spiritual, but Civil.

But you will say, Is there nothing Spiritual in this Discipline? *Ans.* Yes, so far as a Man may by plain Arguments taken out of Holy Writ be convinc'd, that by reason of his Sins he is guilty of Eternal Damnation, and consequently is very justly excluded from the Communion of the Church. For if he thinks himself unjustly excommunicated, the Power of the Ministers or Elders will work no Conviction in him. Perhaps he may be afraid of a Temporal Punishment, or of Disgrace among Men, but he will be secure of his Eternal Salvation in the sight of God. Ecclesiastical Discipline therefore as such, is not any external Jurisdiction properly so call'd, the Church being depriv'd of that: but a serious Denunciation made to a Sinner, that he for his obstinate Perseverance in Sin and the Works of the Flesh, is according to the Rules of the Gospel guilty of Eternal Damnation; and that consequently it is not lawful for her to hold any Communion with him as a Brother, so long as he remains impenitent; that by this means being convinc'd of his Sins, he may be brought to Repentance. This is not therefore so much an Ejection out of, or a Separation from the Church, as it is a voluntary Secession of the Church it self, by which she declares that she will not communicate with such a Person.

What is included in this Discipline.

Mat. 16.
18. ex-
plained.

However, 'tis usually objected to the contrary, that the Power of the Keys was granted by our Saviour to the Church; by which Sins were bound and remitted both in Heaven and in Earth, *Mat. 16. 18.* *Answ.* To bind and loose signified formerly among the *Jews*, the pronouncing any thing to be lawful or unlawful, as *Selden* informs us at large in his Treatise concerning the *Hebrew Sanhedrims*'. But here the Power of binding and loosing Sins is not promised to the Church, but to *Peter*; that is, he was empowered to pronounce what was lawful, and what unlawful. We have already prov'd against the *Romanists*, that a Power and Government properly so call'd over the Church was not promised to *Peter*, but only a Power of announcing the Gospel, which contains the Laws of Eternal Salvation and Damnation, or of declaring what a Man ought to do, and from what things he ought to abstain, that he may attain everlasting Life. Because therefore the Doctrine containing the foremention'd Laws was committed to *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles, the Church may pronounce a Man transgressing the Laws of the Gospel, so long as he is such, to be excluded from everlasting Salvation; which Declaration, if it be not according to the Rules of the Gospel, is of no Authority.

Mat. 18.
17. ex-
plained.

You will say, that our Saviour commands that the Church should look upon such a Man as a Heathen and a Publican, *Mat. 18. 17.* *Answ.* Since there lies a great Dispute about the genuine meaning of this Passage, it may not be amiss to insist a little upon it. *Erastus*² is of Opinion, that by *Church* in this place is meant the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, tho he can produce no Instance of such an Interpretation: That the sense of these Words, *Tell the Church*, is, tell the Magistrate of thy People: If he will not hear, let him be to thee as a Heathen-Man and a Publican, i. e. implead him as a Heathen and a Publican before the Heathen or *Roman Tribunal*. Not to stand to confute each Branch of this Interpretation, we say, (1.) That if it were admitted, then our Saviour would have not only granted,

¹ *Lib. 2. Cap. 7. §. 2.*
Thes. 41, &c.

² *In his Theses concerning Excommu-*

but also commanded the revenging of a private Injury, which is directly repugnant to this very Text; as also to the foregoing Verses, and especially the latter part of this Chapter, from *ver. 21.* to the end. (2.) A Man may commit such an Offence as renders him guilty of Eternal Death, and which another cannot prosecute in a publick Court of Justice; and then what Redress can be made? Others are of Opinion that Excommunication was here instituted by our Saviour. But that this was not here commanded, appears, (1.) Because the Church-Representative; to which alone they say it belongs to excommunicate, was not as yet establish'd. (2.) No Authority is here attributed to the Church, besides that of admonishing. (3.) Our Saviour here treats only of a private Injury, and informs us what Method ought to be us'd to bring a Brother in such a case to Repentance. (3.) To hold one for a Heathen and a Publican is not to exclude him from the Lord's-Supper (for the Publicans, were not excluded from the Temple, as appears from *Luk. 18. 11.*) but only not to converse with him any longer as a Christian and Believer, but to look upon him as a Heathen. (4.) And lastly, the Church is not here commanded to hold such a Man as a Heathen and a Publican, but only the Person offended: Let him be unto THEE, says our Saviour, and not unto the Church, as a Heathen, &c.

Again it may be objected, that there is a Judgment exercised with the Authority of Jesus Christ, *viz.* an Ejection out of the Church, nay a delivering up unto Satan¹. *Ans.* Here again we must in the first place refute the Opinion of *Erastus*², who supposes that this delivering up unto Satan is done, that they who are thus delivered up should be killed and condemned by Satan. But, without saying any more, the very End for which this delivering up unto Satan was appointed, is directly repugnant to this Explication, which *St. Paul* tells us was, that the Spirit may be sav'd in the day of the Lord Jesus; and again, that they may learn not to blaspheme; which can be of no force to one that is kill'd and unavoidably consign'd over to Damnation. Nor is there any Pretext for Ex-

What is meant by delivering up unto Satan.

¹ 1 Cor. 5. 1, &c. 1 Tim. 1. 20. ² Thes. 59.

communication in this place; since, (1.) This was not the Action of the Church, but of the Apostle, by virtue of a special Authority convey'd to him; Nor was this Delivering up unto Satan Excommunication, but a giving him up to the Power of Satan as a Tormentor, who should by some Disease or Affliction torture him in the Flesh, that he might be brought to Repentance, and his Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (2.) It appears from 2 Cor. 2. 6. that the incestuous Person had but one kind of Censure pass'd upon him; for St. Paul speaks there only of one *ἐκτίσις* or Punishment: and the *Corinthians* are admonish'd to pardon the incestuous Person, without any mention of his being absolv'd from his Excommunication. Nor, (3.) was there any occasion of it, since a sorer Punishment was here us'd, *viz.* the delivering him up to the Power of the Devil.

A Query
answered.

But you will ask, What if an excommunicated Person will intrude into the Communion of the Lord's Supper, whether the Church will or not? *Ans.* (1.) 'Tis hardly credible that such a Case should ever happen; and that it is a very rare one, cannot be denied. (2.) If the Church should be under the Protection of a Christian Magistrate, 'tis his Duty to restrain such a Man from disturbing the Peace of the Church. But if it is destitute of the Care of the Magistrate, 'tis enough for the Church to declare, that she does not acknowledge him for a Brother; and if notwithstanding this he will approach the Lord's Table, it will be to his greater Condemnation.

This Discipline includes a Denial of the Lord's Supper.

But on the other side, we cannot but condemn their Opinion, who make this Discipline to consist only in avoiding a familiar Converse, in keeping at such a distance from them, and in solemn Imprecations against them, according to the Method of the *Jewish* Excommunication; but that they may be admitted to the Participation of the Lord's Supper. To this we say, that 'tis inconceivable, how one, who for his Sins and Impenitence is in the Judgment of the Church pronounc'd guilty of eternal Death, and has nothing to do with the Benefits of Christ, should yet be admitted to the Lord's Supper, the most solemn Symbol of our Communion.

However,

However, since all Discipline was intended to bring the Sinner to Repentance, when that End is obtain'd, and the Party testifies the Sincerity of his Repentance by any external Acts, 'tis the Duty of the Church to restore him to his former State, no longer to avoid him, but to esteem him as before, a Brother beloved in Christ Jesus. But all are not agreed how this Re-admission of Penitents ought to be perform'd, nor has the Method of it been always the same in the Church. For in the Primitive Church there were several Rites and Degrees us'd to be observ'd. For it was not only customary, that Persons excommunicated, tho' fully reconcil'd to the Church, should never afterwards hold any Preferment in the Church; but likewise besides a solemn Confession, some long space of Time, nay some Years were required to precede their Reconciliation. There were likewise several Places assign'd, in which they were to testify their Repentance, and so by degrees be received into the Church. As, (1.) They stood before the Porch of the Oratory, weeping for their Faults, and beseeching those who entred to pray for them. This was stil'd *προκατασκευα*. (2.) They were admitted to hear the Word within the Porch in the *Vestibulum*, behind the Catechumens; and this was call'd *ἀνεργασίαι*. (3.) There was the *ὑπόπλωσις*, or Place where they had leave to stand with the Catechumens, and to go out with them. (4.) Another Station was stil'd *οὐρανός*, wherein they stood between the Faithful or the Christian Congregation, and to see them partake of the Lord's Supper. (5.) In another place, call'd *μεσότης*, they waited for their Reconciliation, and after the Imposition of the Bishop's hands, were received again into the Number of the Faithful, and entirely reconciled. All these things, as they were design'd to raise a greater Detestation of Sin, so they may be piously and usefully practis'd, provided it be without Superstition, or any Opinion of the Necessity thereof.

From what has been said, we may perceive that many Persons have shamefully abus'd this Discipline, and neglecting the true Use and Design thereof, have form'd to themselves such Notions of it, as deviate from its first Institution. Of this number are, (1.) Those who

The Penitent to be re-admitted into the Church.

The several Abuses of this Discipline.

exercise

exercise this Discipline with external and coercive Force for the maintaining of an Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, as the *Romanists* at present do. (2.) Which is a Consequence of the former, They who issue out Excommunication against such as deserve it not, *viz.* such as are not guilty of those enormous Sins, which exclude a Man from Eternal Salvation, but are only erroneous in some lesser Matters. (3.) They who exercise this Discipline, not so much for the amending the Sinner, as out of a Spirit of Revenge, that they may bring the excommunicated Person into Disgrace, and render him odious to the Vulgar. (4.) And lastly, They who prescribe so severe an Avoidance of excommunicated Persons, as enjoins the nearest Relations and Friends to keep from their Company.

C H A P. VII.

Of Synods.

Five things **I**N treating of Synods we will consider, I. Their necessity and Usefulness. II. How they ought to be conven'd. III. Who ought to appear in them, and what things are to be transacted by them. IV. By what method they ought to manage these Points. And V. What the Authority of Synods is.

*consider-
able rela-
ting to Sy-
nods.* **1. The Ne-
cessity and
Usefulness
of them.** In the first place then we say, that tho Synods may be held with great usefulness to the Church, if all things be manag'd in them with the Fear of the Lord, and free from Human Passions, yet they are not absolutely necessary for the Being or Well-being of the Church. For (1.) the Convening of them is no where commanded in Scripture. (2.) Whatsoever is absolutely necessary to the Being or Well-being of the Church, ought to have the stamp of Divine Authority, and to be obligatory upon the Consciences of Men; but of this nature the Authority of Synods is not, as we shall more fully evince hereafter. (3.) In the three first Ages of the Church, most eminent for Sincerity of Faith, and Probity of Manners, as well as Chris-
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Chap. 7.

Body of Divinity.

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Christian Charity, no Councils were held.

However, that they are not unlawful, appears from *They are* the Example of the Apostles, *Acts 15.* tho our Syn- *not unlaw-*ods differ very much from that, and are not of so ful. much Authority; nay, if we regard the common Method of holding of Synods, they may be almost reckon'd unlawful. But we know that the Abuse of any thing does not take away the Use of it. Nay, we acknowledge, that sometimes they may be held with advantage to the Church, if they be lawfully held. For (1.) There are some Affairs which relate to many particular Churches, and 'tis very fit that what concerns them all, should be manag'd by all. (2.) By this means the Union is better preserv'd, if many Churches concert their Affairs together. (3.) Add to this, that all things ought to be done decently and in order in the Church. However, after all, it may justly be question'd, whether ever there were such happy Times, besides the Apostolical Age, wherein all that is necessary to the constituting a Christian Synod, was duly observ'd; and consequently, whether Synods have not done more harm than good to the Church, and ought to be laid aside.

Secondly, the Method of convening Synods is different, according to the different State of the Church. *they are to* For if it be under the protection of a Christian Magi- *be con-*strate, 'tis his business, as to take care of the outward *ven'd.* Government of the Church, so to convene Synods, and direct 'em for the Glory of God, and the Edification of the Church. But if it has no Christian Magistrate to defend it, then it belongs to those to whom the Government of the Church is committed by the mutual Consent of the Faithful.

But here the *Romanists* object, that the Right of calling a General Council belongs to the Pope, so that *The Right* of calling one which is not call'd by him is unlawful; because *them, not* there can be no lawful Council unless conven'd in the *lodg'd in* Name of Christ: and this seems to them to be nothing *the Pope.* else but its being assembled by the Authority of Christ, *i. e.* by him who derives his Power from Christ. But (1.) who is there that does not perceive that this whole Argument is founded on the Notion of the Pope's Universal Monarchy over the Church, which we have
else-

elsewhere confuted by several Arguments? (2.) 'Tis false to say, that the convening in the Name of Christ depends on the Authority of him that calls them together: since two or three may meet together in the Name of Christ, without being commission'd by the Authority of any other Person¹.

3. *Who are to appear in them with a Right of Voting.*

Thirdly, for the due understanding who ought to appear in a Synod with a Right of Voting, some distinction is to be made of the Business to be manag'd therein. For some relate to the Government of the Church, others to the dicussing of more subtile Points, and others in the determining Matters of Faith. 'Tis the common Opinion of the *Romanists*, that only the the greater Prelates, viz. the Bishops, have ordinarily a Right of voting decisively; but that by Privilege and Custom, the Cardinals, Abbots, and Superiors of Orders have the same Right, tho they be not Bishops. Many of the Reformed, who truly infer from the Synod held at *Jerusalem*, that the Presbyters have likewise a Right of Voting, do maintain that no Man has such a Right, unless he be sent by any particular Church.

In Matters of Faith the Conscience of no Man is subject to another.

As for our parts, we say, that Matters relating to the Government of the Church may be manag'd by the Deputies of the Churches; that the more nice Points may be discuss'd by the more Learned among them: but that Doctrines of Faith, necessary to be believ'd by all Men, cannot be determin'd either by the Bishops or the Proctors of Churches with an Authority properly so call'd. For that which concerns the Conscience and Eternal Salvation of all and every Man, ought to be manag'd by all Men. For to determine what is to be believ'd and practis'd with an Authority binding the Conscience, belongs to no Man; but is the Prerogative of God the Supreme and only Lawgiver.

Requisite Qualifications for those who meet in a Synod.

Now the Qualifications requisite in those who are to have a Right of Voting or Advising in a Synod, in order to render it of any benefit, are: First, they must be skill'd in Divine Things, well vers'd in the Scriptures, and have their Senses exercis'd to discern be-

¹ Mat. 18. 20.

tween Good and Evil, or between Truth and Falshood : but especially they must be Pious, Prudent, Grave, Moderate, and Lovers of Truth as well as Peace. Secondly, That in the Examination or Debating of any Controversy, they be under a Tie to no Person, Church, Confession, &c. but only to God and Christ, and his Word, and consequently freed from all Human Obligation. The Reason is, (1.) Because otherwise they will not meet together without Prejudice and Passion ; since so long as that Obligation lasts, 'tis their Interest that nothing should be brought into debate contrary to him to whom they are oblig'd. (2.) The Arguments produc'd are rejected without duly examining them, only because they are repugnant to the Interests of him to whom we are obliged, and which we have undertaken to defend. (3.) Nor is the Judgment pass'd according to Scripture, the only Rule of our Faith and Manners, but according to those Forms to which we are tied up. But thirdly, 'Tis farther requisite that they be not wedded to any one side of the Controversy, but free from all Passion, Anger, Hatred and Partiality. For, (1.) 'Tis against all the Rules of Justice, for a contrary Party to sit as Judge in its own Cause, and pronounce a Sentence in its own favour. (2.) 'Tis impossible, but that all the Proceedings and Decrees should be directed to the Prejudice and Oppression of the other Party. (3.) The Cause in debate concerns both Parties, therefore 'tis highly reasonable that the Deputies of both should enjoy an equal Privilege in the Synod ; else the greatest prejudice would be offer'd to the Truth. (4.) Not only no Advantage, but more Mischiefe would accrue to the Church from such a Synod : for it is impossible but that such a partial Decision should beget a Schism, according to the Proverb, *Omne Concilium parit Bellum*.

But you will say, it cannot be otherwise, but that none else can appear in a Synod, but what are addicted to some one Party. *Ans.* (1.) It is therefore just for Deputies of both sides to appear, that the Business relating to all may be manag'd by all with an equal Right. (2.) Because in Matters of Faith no man can prescribe a Rule of Believing to another, much less has an adverse Party this Right. Again, 'tis objected, that

*Objections
answer'd.*

that there is no reason that the Pastors should be depriv'd of the Right of Suffrage, who according to their Duty standing up for the Truth, are against those who teach the contrary. For if this were once admitted, no Man could put a stop to the Spreaders of New Doctrines; nay, he would *ipso facto* lose all Right of judging concerning those Controversies for the future.

Answ. (1.) There is no reason, when Doctrines are call'd into question, why one Party should assume to it self all the Right of Suffrage in exclusion of the other Party: For 'tis impossible, that in such a Synod the Truth should be inquir'd into, but the Decision would be made in favour of one side only, not because it has the most Truth, but the greatest Power of Suffrages. (2.) Before the Truth of any controverted Doctrine appears, a diligent and serious canvassing it on both sides ought to precede: However, if both Parties stand stiff to their Opinions, no decision can be made by one side without manifestly prejudicing the Truth. For it may so happen, that the Truth may be on the side of the Party excluded from the Power of voting; and thus Error would be enacted by the Authority of the Synod, and Truth condemn'd. (3.) We do not deny, but that the Maintainers of an Opinion have a Right of Suffrage in the Synod, but we say that it does not belong to them alone, so as that they shall sit as the only Judges in their own Cause.

But 'tis replied, that they are not Judges in their own Cause; that Truth is the common Treasure of the Church, and cannot by any means be made the Property of any particular Persons. *Answ.* (1.) Since Truth is the common Treasure of the Church, the Disquisition thereof does by common Right belong to all, nor has one any Prerogative over the other. (2.) The Truth cannot indeed be the Property of particular Persons, but some such Persons there may be, who assume to themselves a Right of dictating to others what they would have to be acknowledged for Truth. (3.) It does not as yet appear what is Truth, and consequently it cannot be determin'd on which side it lies. (4.) Tho the Truth be not the Property of any particular Persons, yet the Opinion call'd in question is so.

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'Tis farther said, that they who exercise a Judiciary Authority in Matters of Faith, can neither appropriate the Truth to themselves, nor take it away from others. *Ans.* (1.) This is true, for Error cannot be transform'd into Truth by the unjust Sentence of a Synod; therefore no Man can or ought to pay a blind Obedience to any Synod. (2.) They may by their Suffrages approve of Error, and condemn the Truth: If therefore their Decree be made a Rule of Believing to others, they will both abjure the Truth themselves, and hinder others from knowing it. (3.) Since therefore they cannot appropriate the Truth to themselves, every one ought to be left at his full liberty of enquiring after it, nor ought that Right to be granted to any one Party of Men.

Lastly, they tell us, that the constant Practice of the Church confirms this: For the passing of Judgment has always been lodg'd with them, whom others stil'd an adverse Party to themselves. *Ans.* (1.) A Custom repugnant to natural Equity is not Law. (2.) That Custom has been the occasion why there has scarce been any Synod successful, as *Nazianzen* informs us: but in all of them, through the Ambition and Contests of the Disputants, the Affairs of the Church have rather been rendred worse than better. (3.) This Custom has occasion'd, that the Synods have always pronounc'd their Sentence according to the pleasure of the Emperors; and the Assistants have either given their Votes as the Emperors would have them, or else no others have been admitted, but what were known to be in the Emperor's Interests. (4.) Lastly, This Custom caus'd *Athanasius* to depart from the Council conven'd at *Tyre* by *Constantine*, because he perceiv'd the chief of the Council to act as a Party: and this made *John Chrysostom* not to appear at the Synod conven'd at *Quercus*, tho summon'd four times to it.

A fourth thing considerable in a Synod, is the Method whereby the Business thereof is to be manag'd; *4. The Manner of viz.* That all the Proceedings tend to the Glory of God, the sincere Inquisition of the Truth in Controversy, and the Peace of the Church. To this, several things are requisite: First, that all Matters should be

be examin'd according to the Word of God, as the only Rule of Faith and Manners; for from thence alone ought the Truth, Usefulness, and Necessity of any Doctrine in Controversy, to be sought; and from them the Phrases are to be borrow'd which all Men are to make use of for the Explication of their Faith. Secondly, That the saving Truth express'd in Scripture clearly and fully, ought with the greatest strictness to be retained; for without this no Man can be saved. But this is not to be estimated by the Confessions or Catechisms of this or that Sect, nor by the Decrees of Councils or any other Formularies, but by the Holy Scriptures only. This is the greatest Error, and the Rise of all Schisms, that every Sect has its Principles, by which it desires to be distinguish'd from all others: whereas we should all agree in those things that the Scriptures hold as Fundamental, and so be one in the Lord. Thirdly, That every one be at his full liberty, not indeed of cavilling at every thing, but of speaking his Mind freely about those things that are call'd in question, and of maintaining his Opinion as far as possible. Fourthly, That they who dissent from a Doctrine commonly received, or which is approv'd of by the major part of, or by the whole Synod, or who are ignorant of the Truth, should not upon that account incur any Danger. (1.) Because no Man can determine any thing for another, but for himself only; since Faith depends upon the Authority of God alone. (2.) Because no Man in Matters of Faith can safely rely upon the Judgment of another. Nay, tho the Determination be truly made conformable to the Scripture, yet no Person is bound to it, till he be convinc'd that it is so. Fifthly, The End ought not to be the removing of Differences by any Method whatsoever, and only for the outward Peace and Tranquillity of the Republick; but after a due manner, that Truth may triumph, and every Man's Conscience be satisfied. To this purpose, (1.) The Arguments brought on both sides ought seriously, and in the fear of God, to be consider'd. (2.) The Votes are not to be numbred, but weigh'd, and the Reasons of every Man's Suffrage ought to be enquir'd into. (3.) Care ought to be taken that every Man should

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should be convinc'd of the Truth by the Evidence of Arguments, and no Opinion impos'd as necessary to be believ'd by the determination of certain Articles. If a Synod takes this Method, it will secure the Truth, offer no Violence to any Man's Conscience, and preserve the Peace of the Church. For if one of the Parties can be convinc'd, there is an end of the Dispute, and the Cause is determin'd, not by the Suffrages of the Majority, but by Consent and Persuasion, which alone can satisfy the Conscience. But if neither Party can be convinc'd, but each maintains his side by Arguments which he thinks cannot be answered by the contrary Party, then Liberty and Charity ought to take place, and the Controversy to be left undetermined.

The last thing to be consider'd by us, is, what the Authority of Synods is. But here in the first place a Question is rais'd, whether Synods can err? Here the *Romanists* distinguish between General and Particular Synods, between those that are, or are not approv'd of by the Pope. The *Jesuits* do all of them maintain, that a Council, whether Particular or General, if approved of by the Pope, cannot err in Faith or Manners; but that both of them may err, so long as the Pope does not approve of them, unless the Fathers in their Determination follow the Directions of the Pope. So that all the Infallibility in Councils, according to them, is lodg'd in the Pope, and therefore they are not asham'd to assert, that the Pope is above the Council. But others of the *Romanists* own that the Pope may err, and therefore make him inferior to a General Council, which they say cannot err in determining Articles of Faith, but a Particular Council may. As for our parts we say, that all Councils, whether General or Particular, whether approved or disapproved of by the Pope, are liable to Error, and have many of them very grievously err'd, establishing Errors whilst they condemned the Truth.

That Synods are fallible, we prove from these two plain Arguments: (1.) Without taking notice that there never were any Councils held which were truly Universal, but always consisted of Men of one side only; we say, that all Councils whatsoever are compos'd of such Bishops and Pastors as could each of them

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singly err, and consequently all of them when join'd together in a Council. And truly if Particular Synods, by the Confession of the *Romanists* themselves, are fallible, the same may be said of General ones, which differ from the others in Number only. (2.) The Priests of the Old Testament are reprov'd not only for their Wickedness, but likewise for their Ignorance and Error. Now when such have a right of Suffrage in a Council, what Infallibility can there be in such a Synod?

Objections answered; However the *Romanists* usually object several things to the contrary; and first they urge the Words of our Saviour, *Mat. 18. 20. Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.*

1. Taken out of Mat. 18. 20. *Answ.* (1.) Here is no Promise made of Infallibility. (2.) Here is nothing which can restrain these Words to the determining of things to be believed. (3.) Whatsoever is here promis'd concerns a particular Synod, nay every private Congregation, as much as it does an Universal Council.

2. Taken out of Joh. 14. 17. &c. Secondly, they object what is said *Joh. 14. 17. The Spirit of Truth shall teach you all Truth.* This (say they) is to be understood of the Successors of the Apostles also, because it is there added, that *he should abide with them for ever*; but not of every one apart, therefore of all of them join'd in a Body. *Answ.* This whole Argument is far fetch'd, and depends on these Words, *eis τὴν αἰῶνα*; but these Terms do not in all Places signify to all Eternity, but only *always*. The meaning then is, the Holy Ghost shall be with you, not for two or three Years as I have been, but *always*, and shall never depart from you.

3. From Acts 15. Again, *Acts 15. The Council of Jerusalem says, It seems meet to the Holy Ghost and to Us*; from whence all Councils have taken that Form. *Answ.* By how much the present Teachers and Bishops fall short of the Apostles in the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, by so much is their Authority inferior to the Apostles: And tho we should grant that all the Councils were instituted according to the Pattern of the Apostolical Synod, yet it does not follow that the Copy should come up to the Perfection of the Original.

Lastly,

Lastly, to mention no more, they object, if General Councils may err, then (1.) There would be no fix'd Test in the Church, by which Controversies might be determin'd, and Unity preserv'd. (2.) All the most damnable Heresies might justly be doubted of. (3.) There would be no certainty of many Books of Scripture, of which there was a Scruple made, till the matter was determin'd by a Council. (4.) All Councils would have admitted of an intolerable Error, and consequently deserve no Honour. For 'tis an intolerable Error to propose any thing as an Article of Faith necessary to be believ'd, of which we are not sure whether it be true or false. But the principal Councils, &c. have publish'd new Creeds, or certainly new Opinions, which they would have to be believed as Articles of Faith. Each Branch of this Objection deserves a particular Answer.

To the first we say, that such a Test by which Controversies might be adjust'd, is not necessary, as appears from hence: (1.) Because the examining and proving the Spirits is recommended to every Man, which upon supposition of such a Judge of Controversies, is not only unnecessary, but also useless and of dangerous Consequence. (2.) What if God, for the constant Trial of the Faithful, is minded that there should be always Heresies in the Church, as the Apostle tells us? (3.) By a Synodick Determination the Unity of the Church is so far from being preserv'd, that it is rather broken, as the Issue of all Councils evinces. (4.) Without Synods there is another more convenient means of maintaining Unity, and such as is more agreeable to Christian Charity, viz. a mutual Forbearance of those who dissent from one another in all those things that are not destructive of the Fundamentals of Faith.

To the second Branch we reply, (1.) If the Condemnation of Heresies depend only on the Infallibility of Councils, it may justly be called in question: but that which is founded on plain and clear Declarations of Scripture, cannot admit of any Dispute. (2.) He that is minded to call a Heresy into question, will also question the Authority of the Councils by which it is condemned.

4. Taken from several Absurdities.

1 Cor. 11. 19.

To the third we say, that our being certain of many Books of Scripture does not depend on the Declaration of a Council, since no Council has a right of ascribing Divine Authority to any Book. The Primitive Christians might indeed, being convinc'd by sensible and experimental Arguments, declare what Books were written by the Apostles; and this Declaration might by constant Tradition be preserv'd in the Church. But this they do not declare, as they are in a Council, having a right of determining Controversies, but as Men worthy of Credit, and endued with all the Qualifications requisite to give a sufficient Testimony. But they cannot make any Book Canonical, which they are persuad'd was not penn'd by a Divine Writer. If any Council should attempt this, it would abuse its Power, and shamefully transgress the Bounds thereof.

To the last Branch of the Objection, we say, That nothing can be a greater Prejudice against Councils, by *Bellarmino's* own Confession, than their having publish'd new Creeds and new Opinions. Since the *Romanists* confess this, I will not be afraid to assert, that the Decisions of Synods are of no Authority for the determining Controversies of Faith; and that 'tis rashness to prescribe new Opinions, not express'd in Scripture, as Articles of Faith necessary to be believ'd by the Church.

Infallibility ought to be prov'd from the Promise of God. Upon the whole matter we add, that all such Arguments are of no weight: They should produce some Texts of Scripture, where God has exempted Councils from the danger of falling into Error. For they must needs own, that all the Infallibility of the Council depends on the Direction of the Holy Ghost: If therefore they can produce no clear Promise made by God to a Council, concerning the Direction of the Holy Ghost, and its being preserv'd from all danger of erring, 'tis in vain for them to argue for the Infallibility of Councils upon any other Topicks.

Their Authority only Human. The Infallibility of Synods being thus overthrow'n, 'tis easy to discern what and how great their Authority is: For since they are compos'd of Men subject to Error, 'tis plain that all their Authority is merely Human, and they have no Power of obliging the Consciences, unless so far as they can convince Men that their Decision is made agreeably to the Scripture.

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But for a more distinct view of the Authority of Synods, 'tis to be noted that the matters determined by Synod relate either to the Doctrine of Faith, or to the Government of the Church. The Decrees of Synods relating to the Doctrine of Faith are to be esteemed as Answers of wise and learned Men, who being ask'd their Opinion concerning a Controversy of Faith, return an Answer which they think, according to the best of their Judgment, and after the most strict Enquiry, to be consonant to the Truth delivered in Scripture. These Answers are not rashly to be rejected by us, but nicely squar'd by the Rule of the Divine Word. However they commonly raise in Men no small Prepossession; since they think it not credible, but that God by the Assistance of his Spirit will be so far present with so great a Body of pious and learned Men assembled in his Name, and by Prayers desiring of him the Revelation of some obscure Passage, as not to suffer them to fall into any Error, or at least not into one that is grievous and prejudicial to their Salvation. But how great soever this Prepossession is, yet it is not of that Authority as to make them be obey'd with a blind Obedience; especially since we cannot be sure, whether all of them met with the same pious Inclinations, nay 'tis most notorious that they have often met upon quite another Design, and with a different Temper. They have therefore no other Authority but that of persuading, which is founded not on the Infallibility of the Synod, but on the clear Arguments of Reason and Scripture. Hence it is that the Decrees of Synods cannot be Decisions of Controversies, nor Rules of Faith; but only the Declarations of those who compose the Synod, testifying their Faith and Opinion about some controverted Point, without authoritatively prescribing to others what they ought to believe about it.

As to what concerns the Government of the Church, of which we have already treated at large, it is the Business of Synods, (1.) Not to lord it over the Heritage, but by using their lawful Authority to give a good Example of Life and Manners. (2.) To see that all things be done in the Church decently and in order, and for the Edification of the whole. (3.) Always to

remember that the Christian Church is no longer, as the *Jewish* was, under a legal Schoolmaster, as an Infant or a Servant; but is grown up and free, and consequently is by no means to be loaded with the multitude of Ceremonies or the Severity of Laws; and like adult Children is to be led to Obedience, and not drag'd to it by Authority. But if Councils should transgress their Duty, and decide some things authoritatively, since all things relating to the Government of the Church are external, and consequently in their own nature indifferent, 'tis but reasonable that the Faithful should obey them, so long as they consist in things indifferent, and may with a safe Conscience be complied with.

C H A P. VIII.

Of Hereticks, and their Punishment.

IN discoursing of Hereticks we will enquire, First, who is properly an Heretick: And Secondly, what Punishment ought to be inflicted on him.

I. *Who is properly an Heretick.*

Without amusing our Reader with the various Acceptations of the original words *ἑρεσις* and *ἀιρέσις*, among the Heathens and first Christians; and not to insist upon the Notions of *Beza* and others about Heresy and Heretick: We say, that a Heretick, according to the present Usage of that Word, properly denotes a Man who maintains an Opinion contrary to that which is commonly entertained, or even approved of by a Synod; or rather, who maintains a grievous Error contrary to the Truth publicly received; not that because he is convinc'd that his Opinion is erroneous, but being deceiv'd by vain Argumentations he believes that he maintains the very Truth, and that 'tis his Duty not to desert the Defence of it, but rather to endure the severest Torments than do so. Of these Men then the Question is, what sort of Punishment is to be inflicted on them.

Under this second Head, we shall treat of these three things. First, we shall evince by several Arguments, that no Corporal Punishment, much less Death, ought

to be inflicted on them. Secondly, we shall refute the Arguments usually brought in defence of that cruel and sanguinary Opinion. Thirdly, we shall shew by what Methods and Weapons they are to be opposed, and Heresies are to be rooted out.

In the first place, 'tis the common Opinion of the *Romanists*, that Hereticks (and such in their account are all who will not in all things comply with the Decrees of their Church) ought to have all sorts of Punishments inflicted on them, even Death it self, nay the most exquisite kinds of Death; and this their Opinion is sufficiently confirm'd by their bloody Practice, exceeding by far even Heathen Cruelty. Among the Reformed, *Calvin* and *Beza* endeavoured by whole Tracts to shew, that it is the Duty of Magistrates to exercise the Sword against Hereticks. Among their Followers, some avowedly maintain'd the Opinion of their Masters: whilst others, perceiving this Doctrine, upon the account I suppose of the *Romish* Cruelty so fresh in memory, was odious, not only renounc'd the Doctrine of *Calvin* and *Beza*, but likewise dar'd not avow or maintain it openly. Hence, to palliate so abominable a Doctrine, were those Distinctions found out, between Hereticks simply so call'd, and Hereticks who were obstinate Blasphemers, and Seducers of the People lawfully convicted of damnable Errors: as also between Corporal Punishments, Banishment, Imprisonment, &c. and the Capital Punishment of Death. These things were purposely invented to hide the Turpitude of that Opinion; and yet as occasion serv'd, they might either immediately, or by some degrees of Corporal Punishment, come at last to Hereticide it self.

In refutation of this Opinion we shall offer the following Arguments: As, (1.) It is contrary to the Genius of the Christian Religion to afflict any Man with Corporal Punishments, for the sake of an Opinion about Religious Matters: since it prescribes that we should be as Sheep, and not like Wolves; that we should bear the Cross, and not lay it upon others. (2.) It is repugnant to the Law of Charity, the chief of the Christian Laws, by the Observation of which our Saviour says Men shall know that we are his Disciples, and the keeping of which is call'd the full-

1. The Opinion of the Romanists and of some of the Reformed about Hereticide.

Refuted by several Arguments.

Mat. 5. 10, 11. & 10. 16, &c. Acts 14. 22. Rom. 8. 29. Joh. 13. 34, 35.

- * Mat. 22. filling of the whole Law *. But this prescribes us this
 39. Rom. most equitable Rule, *Whatsoever ye would that Men*
 13. 9, 10. *should do unto you, even so do ye unto them* *. Now
 * Mat. 7. there is no Man, if by chance he should unwittingly
 12. fall into Error, that would be willing any Violence
 should be offer'd to him upon that account, or that he
 should be punish'd with Corporal Punishment: and
 therefore the Law of Charity does not allow that he
 should use it towards another. (3.) Every Man is
 bound to serve God sincerely, according to the full
 persuasion of his own Conscience; for *whatsoever is*
not of Faith, i. e. what is not done by the certain
 Persuasion of Conscience, whereby a Man may ac-
 quiesce in his Deed, as conformable to the Divine
 Will, *is Sin* *. Now the Conscience (as we have of-
 ten observed) is subject to none but to God alone;
 nor can any Man lay a Violence upon another Man's
 Conscience, without inroaching upon the Prerogative
 of Heaven. (4.) Spiritual things are to be spiritually
 discern'd *: But Religion is Spiritual, and the Word of
 * 1 Cor. God the Sword of the Spirit, by which we conquer
 2. 15. our Enemies in our Spiritual Warfare *. (5.) Heresy
 * Eph. 6. is so to be rooted out, that the Error may be destroy-
 17. ed, but the Man saved: Thus, 1 Tim. 1. 20. the A-
 2 Cor. postle says, that he had delivered *Hymeneus* and *A-*
 30. 4, 5. *lexander* up to *Satan*, that they might learn not to
 blaspheme. Now by killing them, the Man is destroy-
 ed, whilst the Heresy remains: So that they who are
 for extirpating Heresies by outward Force, make use of
 very preposterous Weapons; since 'tis a great injury
 to the Truth, as if it were not able to combat Er-
 ror with its own Strength, without the Assistance of
 carnal Weapons: Nay, and it renders Error and He-
 resy very plausible, since it makes the Erroneous to be
 look'd upon as Martyrs for the Truth. (6.) One that
 errs deserves to be pitied, not punish'd; since Error is
 properly a Fault of the Understanding, and not of
 the Will; for no Man would willingly be in an Er-
 * Rom. 16. 17. ror: and by how much the more he errs, by so much
 1 Tim. 6. the greater should our Pity be towards him, and our
 3. 4, 5. Endeavours in reclaiming him. (7.) Hereticks ought
 2 Tim. 2. to be avoided, as appears from all those Texts where-
 18. & 3. in we have the Description of a Heretick *: and it is
 13. Tit. 3. 10. the

the Duty of the Church not to defile it self in partaking of other Mens Sins, and consequently to avoid the Incurable, and such as have departed from the Rule of the Christian Faith. But this Caution will be to no purpose, were they to be put to death by the Magistrate. (8.) It may so happen, that those whom we believe to be Hereticks, may be Professors of the Truth, whilst we without knowing it may be the Patrons of very gross Errors; since we can by no infallible Judgment tell whether the Truth be on our side. Nay, it is foretold, that many out of a Zeal towards God should prove Persecutors¹, and such an one was¹ Joh. 16. Paul²: And then it may chance that out of a mistaken Zeal we shall persecute the Truth it self, and² Acts 9. resist God. (9.) Hereby the Liberty of Conscience^{1, &c. &c.} is oppress'd, so that a Man dare not freely profess^{22. 3, 4, 5.} that, to which he thinks he is oblig'd for the Glory of¹ Tim. 1. God: Nay, Prophecies are extinguish'd, contrary to^{13.} an express Command³, *Quench not the Spirit, despise³ 1 Thess. not Prophesyings, prove all things, hold fast that which is* 5. 19, &c. good. (10.) Faith is the Gift of God, and therefore cannot be implanted in a Man by outward Force. The Strength of this Argument cannot be resisted by those, who maintain that Faith is infus'd into Men by God with an irresistible Power, and that it is impossible for a Man to conceive Faith before that irresistible Operation. For what external Force can promote an Operation that depends merely on the Good-will of God? Or by what Right can a Defect of such an Operation render Men guilty of Punishment before an Earthly Tribunal? (11.) He that is born after the Flesh, is said to persecute him who was born after the Spirit⁴; from whence 'tis plain that Persecution is a⁴ Gal. 4. Work of the Flesh. Not that we assert that Hereticks^{29.} are after the Spirit; God forbid: But this we only say, that a persecuting Spirit, wherever it be found, can by no means be the Character of a Good Man, or of a True Church, let the Persecution be carried on against whomsoever; for it has been the Glory of the Church to be persecuted, but never was it a Persecutor. (12.) In the Primitive Church the Hereticks were not put to Death, nay, they always declar'd against such a piece of Barbarity; but the Hereticks were

were the Persecutors of others, and the first Inventers of the most exquisite Punishments.

The Meaning of the Parable of the Tares.

But here it may be ask'd, whether the Parable of the Tares not to be rooted out till the Harvest, or the End of the World, be not to our purpose in overthrowing the Doctrine of Hereticide? So indeed many Learned Expositors, both antient and modern, have thought: But as for our parts, considering that by our Saviour's own Interpretation, the *Field* is call'd the *World*, not the *Church*; and the *Tares* are stil'd the *Children of the Devil who work Iniquity, and are said to be gathered and thrown into the Fire*; neither of which suits with Hereticks, who according to our Description, are only erroneous, but not wicked Men: therefore we take the plain Meaning of the Parable to be this; "That as to the external State and Remuneration, there is no discrimination between the Good and the Bad in this Life; so that by the prosperous or unprosperous State of Men in this World, it cannot be for certain concluded, That the one is in God's Favour, and has attain'd the Reward of his Piety, and that the other is out of God's Favour, and feels the Punishment of his Sins: But that God allows the Wicked to live together with the Good in this World, just as the Tares grow up with the Wheat, without any discrimination of Happiness or Unhappiness, by which they might be discerned the one from the other. But that this shall be done in the other World, when our Lord shall pronounce a Sentence according to every Man's Works; and having cast the Wicked into the Furnace of Fire, shall introduce the Good into the Glory of the Father, where they shall shine as Suns in the Firmament for ever and ever. And then shall the notorious discrimination be made between the Just and the Unjust, between him who feareth the Lord, and him who feareth him not." If we depart from this plain Sense of the Parable, we shall meet with many Obscurities, and be involv'd in many Perplexities, out of which it will be a very hard matter to extricate our selves.

The Arguments for Hereticide refuted.

We are, in the second place, to consider and refute the Arguments that are usually brought in defence of the

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the Bloody Opinion of Hereticide. The first is taken from several Places of the Old Testament, wherein Apostates, false Prophets, and Blasphemers are commanded to be put to Death, *Deut.* 13. 1, &c. Ch. 18. 20. *Lev.* 24. 16. *Arg. 1. Taken out of Deut. 13. 1, &c.* *Answ.* (1.) In the general we say, that the Judicial Laws of *Moses*, so far as they concern only the *Jewish* Commonwealth, were abrogated upon the Destruction of that Polity, and are not obligatory to us Christians. (2.) If however it be pretended that these Laws are binding upon us Christians, they ought to be observ'd after the same manner wherein God at first instituted them, nor can any Change in the Punishment take place: And then the Father ought to inform against his Heretical Son, the Brother against the Brother, and the Husband against the Wife, and stone them to Death. (3.) In the Law relating to Apostates, none else are meant but those who revolted from *Judaism* to the Idols of the *Gentiles*, and profess'd that they did so. But what has this to do with the Case of Hereticks, who worship only the same God with the *Jews*, adhere to him, and only err in the Interpretation of some Places of Scripture? (4.) The Law mention'd *Deut.* 18. 20. speaks only of the false Prophet, who presum'd to speak in the Name of the Lord those things which the Lord had not commanded him to speak, and so told a Lye in pretending to the Divine Mission. Now this again cannot be applied to Hereticks, who have a very great Esteem for the Word of God, but either through the Prejudice or Error of their Minds understand not the true Meaning thereof. (5.) That the Law mention'd *Lev.* 24. 16. concerning Blasphemers, cannot be applicable in this case, is plain from the Difference there is between a Heretick and a Blasphemer: For a Blasphemer sins wilfully; whereas the Error of a Heretick consists only in the Understanding.

But secondly, they produce the Example of *Elijah*, who destroyed the Worshipers of *Baal*, *1 Kings* 18. 40. *Arg. 2. Taken from 1 Kings 18. 40.* *Answ.* (1.) This was an extraordinary Matter of Fact, proceeding from the special Influence of God's Spirit. (2.) They worshipped an Idol in the Land which was devoted wholly to the external Worship of God, which would not tolerate any such Idolatry in that Place.

Place. (3.) This has relation to the Law, which was rigid, and under which God by the Severity of corporal Judgments and Punishments, was minded to keep the People within the compass of their Duty: Whereas the Gospel is quite of another nature, wholly disowns such a Rigour, and consists entirely of Mildness and Lenity. Hence it is that our Saviour replies to his Disciples, who were for calling down Fire from Heaven upon the Samaritans, *Ye know not what*

'Luk. 9. manner of Spirit ye are of'. As if he had said, You suppose that you are led by the same Spirit that *Elijah* was; but ye are mistaken, for ye do not discern the Times, nor the Reasons of the Times: For now God requires another sort of Temper, nor will he destroy Men with such severe Punishments, but invites them to Repentance by his Long-suffering and Forbearance.

Arg. 3. To the same purpose, thirdly, are the Words of our Saviour alledg'd, *Mat. 18. 6. Whofo shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a Millstone were hang'd about his Neck, and that he were drowned in the Depth of the Sea.* *Answ.* (1.) Our Saviour does not here treat of erroneous Persons, but only of such as despis'd the Weak, and by this their Contempt gave an occasion of Scandal. (2.) Our Saviour does not here say, that it is better for Men to throw the Offender with a Millstone about his Neck into the Depth of the Sea; much less does he command that such a thing should be done after the Sin committed, and the Offence given: But he declares what a dreadful Punishment attends those who are the Despisers of those little ones; viz. that the severest Death were more preferable than that Punishment which they were hereafter to expect in the other World.

Arg. 4. Fourthly, they produce the Example of our Saviour, who with Scourges drove the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, *Mat. 21. 12.* *Answ.* (1.) What have the Buyers and Sellers to do with the Hereticks, who only err in the Interpretation of the Word of God? (2.) It is one thing to drive Persons out of the Temple, and another to banish, proscribe, imprison, and kill them. (3.) The contrary to this may be infer'd, viz. our Saviour cast the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple,

Temple, not because they were Hereticks, but because it was indecent to use any Merchandize in a Place dedicated wholly to God's Service: For he did not cast the *Sadducees* out of the Temple, even tho they deny'd the Resurrection of the Dead. Therefore, if this Matter of Fact be applicable to Hereticks, as is pretended, they are so far from being put to death or banish'd, that they are not to be expell'd the Church.

Fifthly, to the Example of our Saviour they add those of the Apostles, viz. of *Peter*, who kill'd *Ananias* and *Sapphira* for lying against the Holy Ghost; and of *Paul*, who struck *Elymas* with Blindness for endeavouring to turn the Deputy from the Faith. *Arg. 5. from Acts 5. 9, 10. & 13. 10, 11.* *Answ. (1.)* These were extraordinary Facts, wrought by the Apostles miraculously, and such as prov'd their Mission to be Divine, which in the Infancy of the Church was very requisite: but at present we want no such Miracles, since the Divinity of the Gospel is sufficiently confirm'd. *(2.)* The Case of these Persons is very different from that of Hereticks: *Ananias* and *Sapphira* lyed against the Holy Ghost, and were guilty of notorious Hypocrisy: *Elymas* was a Jew and a Sorcerer, who endeavoured to hinder the Deputy from hearkning to the Preaching of *St. Paul*, and from becoming a Christian. *(3.)* We are not to imitate what the Apostles did by a miraculous Power, especially in such cases as relate to the censuring and punishing of Men, unless we had an express Divine Command for it, or were actuated by the same Spirit as the Apostles were.

Sixthly, *St. Paul* says, *1 Tim. 1. 20.* that he had delivered up *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* to *Satan*, that they from might learn not to blaspheme: upon which place *Calvin* makes this Remark; *If Paul at that time could have had the Assistance of a pious Magistrate, one who was a vigorous Avenger of the Glory of Christ, I make no question, but that he would have delivered them whom he chastis'd to be punish'd by the Magistrate.* *Arg. 6. 1 Tim. 1.* *Answ.* This is a barbarous Interpretation of *St. Paul's* Words, and very far from his Intention, as if he would have delivered up those to be kill'd by an Executioner, whom he delivered up unto *Satan*: For how could they learn not to blaspheme, when their Lives were taken away? On the contrary, this Punishment was purely spiritual, by

by which the Apostles delivered up those who rebell'd against the Gospel, to be tormented by *Satan*, and afflicted with various Diseases, that, deter'd by this Punishment, they might be brought to Repentance.

Arg. 7.
from Gal.
5. 12.

Seventhly, St. Paul, Gal. 5. 12. wishes, *I would they were even cut off that trouble you.* Answ. Paul has regard to the *νεῖμα* or Judgment just before mention'd, which he says those Disturbers should bear; but this Judgment was Divine, and already decreed against them. St. Paul therefore wishes, that if they were incurable, this Judgment might immediately be executed upon them, that so they might not seduce any more, nor raise greater Disturbances in the Church: But this makes nothing at all for Hereticide, or cutting off of Hereticks.

Arg. 8.
from Rev.
17. 16, 17.

In the eighth place they tell us, that Rev. 17. 16, 17. it is said that the ten Kings should hate the Whore, and make her desolate and naked, and should eat her Flesh, and burn her with Fire: For God hath put in their Hearts to fulfil *τὴν γνώμην αὐτοῦ*, his Will. Answ. (1.) The Case of Antichrist blaspheming and making himself drunk with the Blood of the Saints, is quite different from that of erroneous Hereticks, who detest both Antichrist and his Persecutions. Nor (2.) does it appear from the Text, that any Power was given to these Kings of killing Antichrist; but 'tis only a Prediction of what should come to pass, and not a Command.

Arg. 9.
from Rom.
13. 4.

In the next place they urge Rom. 13. 4. *The Magistrate bears not the Sword in vain.* Answ. The Magistrate bears the Sword, by Punishments to restrain the Wicked and Ungodly; before therefore he can punish, it must appear that such or such a Person is of that number. Since then in the Dissensions about the more obscure and secret Mysteries of Religion, it is not as yet determin'd by an infallible Judgment on whose side the Truth lies, it cannot likewise appear where the Crime is. Add to this, that Error is an Offence that does not merit Punishment. And lastly, the Magistrate cannot nor ought to extend his Authority beyond the Limits which God has prescrib'd him; for he is the Minister of God, and his Power is limited. But he has no Dominion granted him over the Consciences of Men; and

and if he assumes it to himself, he transgresses the Bounds of his Authority, and invades the Prerogative of God.

Tenthly, they say, That Thieves and Robbers are Arg. 10. justly put to death by the Magistrate; with much greater reason ought Hereticks, who are compar'd to ravening Wolves¹, and to Thieves and Robbers². Again, 'Mat. 7. false Coiners of Mony. and Poisoners are put to 15. death; much more, say they, ought the Falsifiers and Acts 20. Corrupters of the Word of God, who by the Poison 29. of their false Doctrines destroy the Souls of Men, to ^{John 10.} be cut off. *Ans.* Who cannot but pity the sad Estate of Christianity, when the Doctors thereof make use of such unnatural and inhuman Arguments, and excite the poor Populace to such a Cruelty as is inconsistent with the Meekness and Moderation of a Christian? For, (1.) Suppose that Error in Religion were a Crime (which however need not be granted) yet these Crimes are so different, that no Inference can be drawn from the one, which can affect the other. For Error, if it be a Crime, is committed directly against God, not against the Magistrate: since it disturbs not the publick Peace, robs no Man of his Possessions, but proceeds from Principles of a mistaken Conscience, which is subject to the Cognizance of God alone, and not to that of the Magistrate, unless the Heretick be as great a Disturber of the Publick Tranquillity, as Thieves, Robbers, &c. are. (2.) If this Inference were of any force, 'tis requisite, that before Hereticks are kill'd, it should infallibly be known who those Hereticks are; just as Thieves, Coiners, &c. are not put to death, till the Crime charg'd against them be fully made out. (3.) These Men not only confess that they are Robbers and Coiners, but also that they have done ill, and deserve to be punish'd: whereas Hereticks believe that they have done well, promoted the Glory of God, and consequently deserve not Punishment, but Praise and Thanks. (4.) He who by inadvertency kills another, is not to be put to death; for God himself under the Old Testament appointed Cities of Refuge for such Persons to flee unto: Much less ought a Physician to be sentenc'd to die, who supposing that he gives to his Patient a Cordial, does through imprudence

dence prescribe him a deadly Draught. But of this nature are Hereticks, who hurt not others with a design of injuring, but of doing them a real Kindness. (5.) Add to these, that they injure no body but those that are willing, in whose power it is to beware of their Seducements. (6.) If the foremention'd Inference were to be admitted, the best and most diligent Enquirers into Scripture would be liable to Punishment, whereas they who neglect the Reading thereof would fairly escape. The Reason is, because the latter making no account of Religion, by a blind *Impetus*, like Flocks of Sheep, follow their Leaders: whereas the former seeking after the Truth, easily discover some Errors that are publickly entertain'd, for the removing of which if they use their Endeavours, they run the risk of being punish'd as Hereticks. (7.) And lastly, if this way of arguing were allow'd of, why are not the Covetous, the Drunkards, the Whoremongers, &c. put to death, who by their Examples do a great deal of Mischief, and hurry Mens Souls into everlasting Perdition? Why then are these set free, and only Hereticks, who are frequently Men of known Piety, punish'd? Why, after the Example of the *Jews*, *Jesus* is crucified, and *Barrabas* acquitted?

Arg. 11.
from Ecclesiastical
Discipline.

Lastly, they tell us, that by this means the whole Ecclesiastical Discipline will be destroy'd, Confusion will arise, and all manner of Heresies be introduc'd. *Ans.* (1.) As if Heresies could not be restrain'd but by outward Violence; nay, they cannot be restrain'd by this means, but are to be oppos'd by spiritual Weapons. (2.) It is advantageous to the Church that there should be Heresies, *that they who are approved* may be made manifest. (3.) Ecclesiastical Discipline will not be destroy'd; nay, what we urge is, that that Discipline should take place, and all external Force repugnant thereto might be avoided: For Ecclesiastical Discipline is the only Remedy of refuting and restraining Heresies; which consists in these two things, in the refutation of Errors, and in avoiding the Erroroneous, if they persevere in their Error.

1 Cor. 11.
19.

How Hereticks are
to be restrain'd.

That we may therefore deliver our own Opinion concerning the restraining of Hereticks, we think fit to make a distinction, (1.) Between the Political and

and Spiritual Government. (2.) Between the publick Exercise of Religion in Churches, and the private in private Houses. (3.) Between notorious Crimes and simple Errors. (4.) 'Tis one thing to force a Man to embrace any Opinion for true; and another to command him for the sake of the publick Peace to abstain from calumniating; abusive and injurious Speeches and Actions. These things being premis'd, we say, that 'tis not lawful for a Magistrate to force any Man to embrace this or that Opinion, or to be in Communion with the publick Church, if he believes that it is departed from the saving Faith, or is guilty of such Sins as exclude a Man from the Kingdom of Heaven: tho he may punish, according to the Fact, wicked and turbulent Men pretending to Religion, so often as they offend against the Laws of the State. It is not lawful for Ecclesiastical Persons to call in the secular Arm against Hereticks, tho they may recede from them, and hold no longer Communion with them in sacred things. Let every Man therefore discharge his Duty in this Matter.

Let the Magistrate, for instance, execute Judgment in things that fall within his cognizance: let him protect the Good, and punish the Bad. Let him take care that the Doctrine which he looks upon to be true be taught in the publick Churches, and make use of all the mild Methods imaginable, whereby to invite and persuade his dissenting Subjects to conform to the publick and established Religion. But let him not force any Man against his own Conscience to be of his Religion, nor by Violence or Edicts restrain Men from the Exercise of a Religion contrary to his in their private Houses. Let the Pastors of the Flock do likewise their Duty; let them teach the Word of God purely; convince the Erroneous by the Light of the Scriptures, or the Force of Arguments; whom they cannot convince, let them tolerate, till God has pity on them, and reveals to them what hitherto they are ignorant of: If any err in Fundamentals, let them separate themselves from them; but not excite others against them, to extirpate them by Fire and Sword. Lastly, let all Persons in their private Capacities maintain at least the publick Peace and Unity, abstaining from all

reproachful and bitter Reflections; discourse calmly with one another about the Differences in Religion, and pray for an Union, that if their Judgments and Opinions cannot, yet at least their Love and Affections may be the same. By this amicable means we shall at last come to an end of those unhappy Divisions, or at least have more charitable and christian Thoughts of one another, tho we may be mistaken in some Points.

C H A P. IX.

Of Toleration, or Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion.

*Four things
considera-
ble.*

HAVING explained how we ought to deal with Heretics, or Persons erring in Points necessary to be believed in order to Salvation, it remains that we should enquire what the Duty of the Church is with respect to those that are simply erroneous, or who holding the same Fundamentals with our selves, do yet dissent from us in the Explication of some Doctrines not destructive of Salvation. And here we shall, I. By way of Preface establish the difference between Articles necessary to Salvation, and those which are not. II. We shall inform you by what Signs and Tokens a necessary Article ought to be distinguish'd from that which is not necessary. III. We shall shew that a mutual Toleration ought to be admitted between Persons dissenting from each other in Articles not necessary. IV. By what means this Toleration may be maintain'd, saving to every one the Liberty of Preaching, and how all Confusion may be avoided, and the Truth be preserv'd in the Church.

S E C T. I.

Of the difference between Articles necessary to Salvation, and those which are not; and by what Tokens it may be known.

It may seem superfluous to demonstrate the first of the forementioned Particulars; did not some Divines, averle

averse to Peace and Unity, and breathing forth nothing but Strife and Contention, not only call so clear and manifest a Truth into question, but likewise expressly deny it, declaring that all Articles are fundamental, and that every Error in Religion renders a Man guilty of eternal Damnation. We therefore shall maintain this difference by the following Arguments.

The first Argument we take from what the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 3. 10, &c. *According to the Grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise Master-Builder I have laid the Foundation, and another buildeth thereon, &c.*

In this place the Apostle makes a manifest distinction between the Foundation and that which is built upon it. The things built upon this Foundation are either true and excellent Doctrines, which render the Disciples firm and constant; and these are compar'd to Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, which can endure the Test of the Fire; or else vain, inefficacious and erroneous Doctrines, compar'd to Wood, Hay and Stubble, since they cannot endure the Test of the Fire. Concerning the former he says, that the Teachers of them shall receive the Reward of their Building; but of the latter, that they shall suffer the Loss of their whole Work: yet because they have not departed from the Foundation, they shall not be deprived of Salvation. For the Confirmation of this Exposition, we have the famous *Usher's* Opinion, in his Treatise, *De Successione Ecclesiarum in Occidente*, Cap. 1. §. 12.

But to this it may be objected, that whatsoever is built upon the Foundation is fundamental, and is not the Foundation it self. *Ans.* Those Men play upon the words Foundation and Fundamental; for that is not Fundamental which has some regard to a Foundation, as a House to the Foundation on which 'tis built: but that is Fundamental, which is requir'd to the Essence and Constitution of the Foundation it self; so that Fundamental and Foundation is one and the same thing. For the word Foundation may be taken either incompletely, and then it is but one, viz. our Saviour Jesus Christ; or complexly, and then it denotes the Fundamental Truth, without the Knowledge and Belief of which no Man can be said to believe in Jesus Christ. In this latter Sense it is that we understand the word Foundation

I. The difference between Articles necessary and not necessary.

Prov'd,
1. From
1 Cor. 3.
10, &c.

Objections
answer'd.

dation in this place, and to the Essence thereof are required all those Doctrines which ought not only to be believ'd as true, but as absolutely necessary to Salvation; so that if any Man should be ignorant of, or deny, or doubt of them, he cannot, according to the Terms of the New Covenant, attain eternal Salvation.

Again 'tis said, he shall be saved if he permit the Wood, Hay and Stubble to be burnt by the Fire of the Divine Word, *i. e.* if he renounce his false Doctrine. *Ans.* Who is there that does not wonder at such a forc'd Explication, so directly repugnant to the Words and Scope of the Text? For, (1.) It is not said, that he shall be saved if he permit the Stubble to be burnt; but, that when the Trial shall be made by Fire, the Stubble shall be burnt: for it is not in a Man's power whether he will or will not have them burnt, but that Fire of Trial shall consume the Stubble so that they cannot remain. They being consumed, the Builder of them will receive no Reward of his Labour; yet because he has always strictly adher'd to the Foundation laid by the Apostles, he shall obtain everlasting Salvation. (2.) The Apostle says, when the Stubble shall be burnt, the Builder of them shall suffer Loss: but he suffers no Loss, who renouncing his Error embraces the Truth, and by means thereof attains to eternal Life; whereas he who perceives all the Fruit of his Labour to be lost, does really suffer the Loss of all his Work. (3.) The same is evinc'd by the very Design of the Apostle; for he admonishes the *Corinthians*, that notwithstanding some Dissensions, yet they should observe a mutual Peace; and that for this Reason, because they all retain'd the Foundation, by which means every one's Salvation was certain, tho they might build upon that Foundation Hay and Stubble, *i. e.* vain Doctrines. But if the Apostle's meaning had been, that they could not obtain eternal Salvation but upon condition that they renounc'd their vain Doctrine, he would have wholly enervated his own Argument: for the *Corinthians*, would have readily answered, that they were willing to maintain Peace with those who dissented from them, as soon as they would permit their Stubble to be burnt, *i. e.* as soon as they renounc'd their erroneous Doctrine. (4.) At this rate not

not only he will be saved, who retaining the Foundation builds upon it Stubble, but likewise he who rejecting the true builds upon a false Foundation, if he suffer it to be burnt by the Fire of the Divine Word.

But secondly, this difference manifestly appears from the very Doctrines of the Christian Religion. For they are not all of the same Weight and Moment, so as to preclude us from all hopes of Salvation, if we should be either ignorant of, or not rightly understand them.

Thirdly, 'tis the highest piece of Presumption imaginable, to determine that all Errors are Fundamental: For (1.) they must either say, that they err in no one Doctrine, no not in the least Punctilio, which is the Height of Arrogance, and making themselves more than Men: or if, since they are but Men, they own themselves to be subject to the common Infirmities of Mankind, they in their own Judgment exclude themselves from the Kingdom of Heaven. (2.) 'Tis necessary that they pronounce all, who err even in the least matters, to be guilty of eternal Damnation. They confess, if we mind the Rule of God's Word, that all Error is damnable; since whoever preaches any other Gospel than what is preach'd, tho it were an Angel from Heaven, is *Anathema*, or *Accursed*, and every Error is in their account a new Gospel: And thus they are under a necessity of damning all who dissent from them; which is not only repugnant to the very Genius of Christianity, but likewise barbarous and inhuman. 'Tis damning Men by whole-sale, and throwing the very Fathers of the Primitive Church, those Glorious Lights of the Christian Religion, into Hell, since they (as well as other Men) were not without their Failings and Errors in some lesser Matters. And what barbarous Usage is this?

II. Having thus evinc'd the difference between Articles necessary to be believed, and those which are not necessary, it follows that we should in the second place enquire by what Tokens an Article necessary to be believed may be discovered. Whereas 'tis God alone who is graciously pleas'd to decree and bestow upon us eternal Salvation, it belongs to him only to prescribe to us such Laws, and to direct us in such a way, as may bring us to it. The Laws therefore of Salvation and

2. From the very Doctrines of Christianity.

3. From the Absurdities of the contrary Opinion.

Gal. 1.

II. How this difference can be known.

Damnation must be sought after in the Scriptures, that clear and perfect Rule, which comprehends whatsoever is necessary for us to know, believe, hope for, and practise, in order to the obtaining everlasting Life. To this certain, clear and infallible Rule must we bring all Doctrines, and try the Weight and Importance of them by this Standard.

Rule 1.

¹ See to
this purpose

Joh. 3. 36.

& 17. 3.

Acts 16.

31. Rom.

10. 9. Gal.

5. 2, 3, 4, 5.

¹ Joh. 2.

22, 23. &

4. 2, 3.

Since then the Scripture requires two things as necessary to Salvation, *viz.* Faith in God and Jesus Christ, and Obedience or Holiness of Life grounded upon the Expectation of the Divine Promises; it is plain, that these things are necessary: First, such as the Scripture requires as essential to Faith, and are clearly delivered therein, with a Note of Necessity added thereto; *viz.* that *whosoever believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*; with several other Expressions of the like nature, to be met with in the New Testament. Now these and such like things being clearly expressed and determined, ought to be accounted as necessary to be believed. For though really there is but one Foundation of Salvation, *viz.* the Lord Christ Jesus; yet upon the account of the various Effects it has upon the Work of our Salvation, it may be considered several ways, and branch'd out into many Particulars, which shall all agree in one and the same Truth, like many Lines which meet in one and the same Center. Under these things, evidently express'd in Scripture, we comprehend those which are so necessarily annexed to them, that they may be deduced from them by a necessary Connexion, and which have been believed by all Christians, at all Times and in all Places. The Summary of which, is contain'd in that which is vulgarly call'd the Apostles Creed.

Rule 2.

Secondly, those things are necessary, without which the Practice of Piety and the Hopes of Eternal Life cannot subsist. For since without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord, and Godliness has the Promise both of this Life and of that which is to come; all those things ought to be esteemed as necessary, by which Godliness and the Hopes of Eternal Life are so far supported, as that they cannot subsist without them: Of which, among others, is the Doctrine concerning the Resur-

Resurrection of Jesus Christ, according as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. 15. 17, 18. *If Christ be not raised, your Faith is in vain, ye are yet in your Sins: Then they also who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished.*

If all the Doctrines of Christianity were to be examined by these Rules, we shall find, (1.) That those which are necessary are very few in comparison of those many that are either not necessary, or are very useless and hurtful. (2.) That 'tis scarce possible for a Man, who has a due respect for the Scriptures, and makes them the only Rule of his Faith and Manners, and is heartily concerned for his eternal State, to fall into any deadly Error. For the things necessary are not only clearly express'd in Scripture, but are to be met with frequently and in many Passages; so that if they are delivered more obscurely in one place, they are propounded more clearly in another. Hence it is, that tho a Man should err in apprehending the true Sense of some place of Scripture, yet he will not depart from the Faith of the Doctrine it self, which is plainly express'd in another place; provided he only take care, not to found this Doctrine on the more obscure, but on the clearer Texts of Scripture. For instance, let us take Joh. 3. 5. where 'tis said, *Unless a Man be born of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Now the Romanists and Protestants are in dispute about the genuine Meaning of this Text, the latter understanding it of Spiritual Regeneration, the former of Baptism as the Instrument of Regeneration. The Necessity therefore of this Doctrine is not to be establish'd on this place, but on other plainer Texts, which clearly treat either of Baptism or Regeneration. By this means it will appear that the Controversies among Christians about Doctrines necessary to Salvation are very rare, and that they generally agree in these points, especially if they have a due regard for the Scriptures.

Necessary
Doctrines
few in
Number.

From what has been said, we may easily perceive what those things are which are not necessary, and which we may be wanting of, without losing our everlasting Salvation; and about which we may err, and not be out of hopes of being saved; viz. such as want one of the forementioned Qualifications. In the

Things not
necessary
according
to the first
Rule.

first place then, those things are not necessary, (1.) Of which there is no mention made in Scripture, but such as depend merely on Human Traditions and Decrees. Of this nature are not only many Superstitions in the Church of *Rome*, but several Phrases and Manners of Expression not us'd in Holy Writ: So that tho some Phrases were invented and received by the Consent of many Persons, nay of whole Councils, for the better Explanation of some one Doctrine; yet no Man is tied up to them, since they are not Scriptural Expressions. Such are the Words *Trinity, Person, Homo-ousion, Merit, Satisfaction*, with the like, which are not only of a doubtful Meaning, but are also no where to be met with in Scripture in the same sense which is at present applied to them. (2.) Such things as are not clearly express'd in Scripture, but deduc'd from thence by obscure, subtle and far-fetch'd Consequences, for the discovering of which there is need of great Parts, or which are only founded on Metaphysical Speculations: Of which nature are many of those Points disputed of in the Schools, about the Nature, Essence, Attributes and Decrees of God. (3.) Such things as are clearly express'd in Scripture, but not with any Mark of Necessity; for tho all things necessary to be believ'd are clearly contain'd in Scripture, yet every thing clearly express'd therein is not necessary to be believ'd; unless God is pleas'd to annex Salvation to the Belief or Observation thereof. A Man may, for instance, be ignorant of some Historical Matters of Fact related in Scripture, without any hazard of his Eternal Salvation.

Things not
necessary
according
to the se-
cond Rule.

Nor, secondly, are they to be reckon'd as things necessary, which want the other Qualification; of which nature are, (1.) Those things which are purely speculative, and have no tendency at all to the practice of Piety, and which make a Man never the better for knowing them, and never the worse for being ignorant of them. (2.) Such things as relate to Practice, are of some use, and may excite a Man to greater Godliness; but yet have not simply any necessary Connection therewith; but a Man may be Godly without such Helps. (3.) Such things as have of themselves a close and necessary Connection with the Observance of the Divine Laws,

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Laws, which however is not minded, either through Ignorance or some Weakness of the Judgment, by those who profess a contrary Error : in whom consequently a Doctrine tending in its own nature to the subverting of Piety, has not that effect, because they have a greater regard to the clear Precepts of God, than to the Genius of their own Doctrine.

For it very frequently happens in fact, that the Doctrines necessary to Salvation, and the Divine Precepts clearly set down in Scripture, have taken entire possession of the Mind, and prevail over the Will and Affections ; whereas the contrary Errors are only in speculation, and are not apprehended to be repugnant to the saving Truth. For it is likely, that the Mind being blinded through Weakness of Judgment, or the Over-fondness of their own Opinions, may not perceive that it holds two contrary Opinions ; but endeavours to reconcile them. So long as the Understanding is only employed in the speculation of things, it does not accurately take notice of this Repugnancy, and thinks it may be remov'd by some subtle Reasonings and Distinctions : But when it comes to practice, the Consequences of these repugnant things are so manifest, that one must needs give way to the other.

Again, Error consider'd in it self is only inherent in the Mind, nor has it any necessary Connection with the Practice of Piety ; however some other Error, or Act forbidden by the Law of God, may be built upon it, whereby Piety may suffer a great detriment. The former of these cannot be call'd a damnable Error, because it is not destructive of Piety, but only the latter, or rather the Act founded upon it, and manifestly repugnant to the Divine Law. For instance, the Opinion of the *Romanists* about the real Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, is an Error of it self not destructive of true Piety, and consequently is not damnable : But they have founded upon this Notion the idolatrous Adoration of the Eucharistical Bread, and so make themselves guilty in the sight of God of paying Divine Worship to a vile and inanimate Creature, and consequently of the basest and grossest Idolatry.

Lastly, Error may either be level'd against a Fundamental Doctrine, or only against some Circumstance

Between two contrary Opinions in the Will, one may be most prevalent.

A damnable Error may be founded upon another that is not so.

*Error about
some Fun-
damental
Doctrine, or
about some
Circum-
stance
thereof.*

stance of that Doctrine. The Doctrine it self cannot be denied, without hazarding our Salvation ; but the Circumstance may be either not known or denied, without that Danger. Thus 'tis necessary for us to believe that God is every where Present, Eternal, &c. because without such a Faith the Necessity of Divine Worship would be taken away, and our Hopes of the Promise of Eternal Life be shaken : But then 'tis not as necessary to believe, that God like a Point is present in every Atom of Matter with his whole Essence ; or that he is so Eternal, as that there is no distinction in him of Time past, present, and to come. The Case is much the same with respect to the Resurrection of the Dead, which being the Foundation of our whole Salvation, we ought not either to be ignorant of it, or deny it. But then 'tis not so necessary to determine, whether the same numerical Bodies are to be rais'd again, or whether God will produce at the Resurrection other Spiritual and Glorious Bodies in their steads, and unite them to the Souls of the Faithful.

*Errors
with re-
spect to the
Moral Pre-
cepts.*

Hitherto we have consider'd the difference between things necessary and not necessary, so far as 'tis to be found in Doctrines, wherein Faith is properly concern'd, in order to preserve the Love of Piety, and our Hope and Trust in God. Our Errors are more rare with respect to the Knowledge of the Divine Precepts, since these are plain and obvious, and Sins against them proceed more from the Wickedness of the heart, than from Error. But that we may say something concerning the Errors of this kind, we distinguish the Precepts into Moral and Ceremonial. There are very few Controversies about the true and genuine Sense of the Moral Precepts, unless it be concerning the particular Application of them to some special Cases of Conscience, which however no Man thinks necessary to be explain'd in order to Salvation.

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them are
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As to the rest, we say, either the Errors imply a manifest Violation of the Divine Precepts necessary to be observ'd, in order to Salvation, or are fairly consistent therewith. The former of these are deadly, and since they are prejudicial to Piety, the Practice whereof is necessary to Salvation, they are inconsistent with the hopes of Salvation, according to the Terms

Terms of the New Covenant. Of this nature is the Error of the *Romanists* about worshipping of Images and the Consecrated Host, which is a direct Violation of the second Commandment, and downright Idolatry, of which they who are guilty shall not inherit the Kingdom of God'. Of the same nature is the Error of the *Romanists* and of some *Protestants* concerning Hereticide, which is destructive of Charity, the chief Precept of the New Covenant. 1 Cor. 6.

But the Case is not the same with respect to those Errors, which deviate indeed from the genuine Interpretation of the Precepts of Christ, but yet do not force them who are under the Prevalence thereof to violate any one Precept: For such as these think that to be unlawful, which is no where forbidden by the Christian Religion. Now to abstain from things lawful, is no Sin. Of this nature is the Error of those Men, who look upon it to be unlawful for a Christian to bear the Office of a Magistrate, or to take an Oath. For tho both these are highly necessary for the Preservation of the publick Tranquillity; yet they who believe it unlawful for a Christian to bear the Office of a Magistrate, do not upon that account desire to exclude that Office out of the World, it being so highly conducive to the Welfare of Mankind: but they only maintain that 'tis the part of a Christian to decline the Administration of that Office, as being repugnant to Christian Modesty and Forbearance. Now if they proceed no farther; if they do not condemn those who discharge that Office, as no Christians, but bear with them as erroneous, they ought not to be charg'd as Transgressors of the Divine Precepts. But if they should anathematize and excommunicate Magistrates, they are to be reckon'd as Violators of the Law of Christ, not upon the account of their Error, but for their rash Censure and want of Charity. As to Oaths, the Case is more plain: For he who, mov'd with a Reverence to the Divine Prohibition², abstains from all manner of Oaths, who would have the same Credit to be given to his bare Word as is to an Oath, nay, who refuses not to be subject to the same Penalty as a perjur'd Person, should he fail in his Word; such an one, I say, is not to be counted as one that teaches any thing destructive of the Divine Commands. Mat. 5. 33, &c.

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Errors about Ceremonies not Fundamental.

As to the genuine Meaning of the Ceremonial Precepts, and the various Circumstances of them, there have been greater Disputes with respect to these: As for instance, concerning Baptism, whether it be an Instrument of Regeneration; whether it be to be administred to Infants or the Adult, with the like. With respect to the Lord's Supper, whether there be in it the true and substantial Body of Jesus Christ, either by Transubstantiation, as the *Romanists*, or by Consubstantiation, as the *Lutherans* hold; or whether only Bread and Wine, as Symbols representing to us the Body and Blood of Christ; with other Points already discours'd of at large. We therefore in a word or two only say, That since Ceremonies are no part of true Holiness, but are observ'd out of respect to the Divine Command, as Symbols representing and sealing to us the Divine Grace, and our Obligation to the Duty we owe to God; all the Controversies about them are to be reckon'd among things less necessary.

What we ought to think of the Popish Ceremonies.

From hence it easily appears what we ought to think of the Observance of the various Ceremonies introduc'd into the *Romish* Church with a great Opinion of their being meritorious; viz. that they may be very prejudicial to the inward and spiritual Worship, if too great a stress be laid upon them: however, that consider'd in themselves they may be tolerated as Infirmitities in those Persons, who think themselves bound to observe them; but they cannot be prescribed as necessary to be observ'd by others, without destroying the Christian Liberty. If therefore the *Romanists* would condemn no Man for the Non-observance of their Ceremonies, they might likewise be tolerated in the Observation of them as erroneous Persons, who put themselves under the Yoke of unnecessary Ceremonies.

What of the Controversies relating to Church-Government.

Lastly, it remains that we should say something with respect to the Questions concerning Church-Government, viz. Whether it ought to be administred by Bishops or by Presbyters. But these have no right to be reckon'd among things necessary to Salvation; because they want both the Qualifications requisite to render them such: for they are neither clearly determin'd in Scripture, neither do they strike at, much less are they destructive of the Practice of Piety. My Opinion

Opinion therefore is, that it is the Duty of every Man to comply with that Form of Church-Government which prevails in the Place wherein he lives, when 'tis instituted only for the sake of observing outward Order: Provided care be taken, that under the pretence of keeping good Order, the Liberty of the Conscience be not oppress'd, and that no Rule of Faith be prescrib'd to the Church besides what is contain'd in the Word of God.

From what has been said, it appears that the Doctrines *The Doc-* of the Christian Religion may be rang'd under these *trines* of three Heads: (1.) Some are neither clearly express'd *Christiani-* in Scripture, nor have any Connection with Piety: *ty compri-* About these some things are enquir'd after out of *sed under* curiosity, which we may more safely be ignorant of, *3 Heads.* and which sometimes are prejudicial to Piety, and ought according to the Apostle's Direction to be avoid-
ed'. Others are suppos'd to be conducive to the right *1 Tim.* understanding of several Passages of Holy Writ, *1. 4.* whereas the Difference is so little, that they really fall in with the Doctrines from which they seem to recede. (2.) Other Doctrines there are which are not indeed absolutely necessary, but yet have a great Connection with the Practice of Piety, and with Doctrines absolutely necessary, wherein if a Man should err, he would be in danger lest his Error should affect his Piety. (3.) And lastly, other Doctrines are absolutely necessary to Salvation, express'd in Scripture clearly and with a Mark of Necessity, without believing of which we can neither obey the Precepts of God, nor rely upon his Promises, nor attain Eternal Life: and these we have already shew'd to be few in number.

S E C T. II.

A mutual Toleration to be maintain'd between Persons who disagree in Articles not necessary.

Having established the foremention'd Points, we *III. Union* shall with ABp *Usher*, for the Peace of the Church, draw *to be main-* these three Inferences from them. "First, That tho *tain'd;*
"Errors could be demonstrated to be in any Visible
"Church, yet it does not follow that it immediately
"ceases to be a true Church of Christ; provided the
"Errors be such, as are not destructive of the Faith,
"or

“ or a Hindrance to the Salvation of the Godly.” For if any Church should renounce the Faith, and the Fundamentals of the Apostolical Preaching, such a Church ought to be forsaken. “ Secondly, That ’tis “ in vain to seek after an universal Consent in all the “ Doctrines in all the Visible Churches of all Times “ and Places; since that cannot be done but in the “ chief and most weighty Articles of Religion: and “ the antient Consent of the Holy Fathers does not “ lie in all the minute Questions of the Divine Law, “ but only and chiefly in the Rule of Faith. Thirdly, “ As often as any Question is started in the Business of “ Religion, of the agreeing or disagreeing of one or “ two Churches with a third, some Caution ought to “ be us’d, nor are the Doctrines wherein they agree “ or disagree to be numbred, but duly weigh’d and “ consider’d.

And Brotherly Communion between all who retain the Fundamentals of Faith.

Upon these Words of the Arch-Bp we found the following Assertion: That Peace and brotherly Communion ought to be maintain’d and testified by some external Symbol, such as the Participation of the Lord’s Supper, even between all who retain the same Foundation of Faith, tho they should err in Matters of less moment, which are neither destructive of Faith, nor a hindrance to Eternal Salvation. For either such a Communion ought to be maintain’d with those that dissent from us, or else they are to be anathematiz’d: because the being excluded from the Communion of the Church is a publick Denunciation of the Guilt of Eternal Damnation, according to the Rules of the Gospel; since whatever is bound in Earth, is suppos’d to be bound also in Heaven. Whereas therefore God is the only Lawgiver, and he has left no other Rule (that we know of) of attaining Salvation besides the Scriptures, it is plain, that whoever do anathematize others for their dissenting in Articles not fundamental, and thereby break the Unity of the Church, are guilty of offending;

Prov’d by several Arguments.

First, against God, whose Tribunal and Authority they usurp, in prescribing such Laws of Salvation and Damnation as were never dictated by him. Now with what grounds can they expect to be well-pleasing to God, if they condemn those whom he acquits; think them unworthy of the Name of Brethren, whom he honours

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honours with the Title of Sons; or drive them from their Communion, whom he vouchsafes to receive into Heaven? (2.) They offend against their Neighbour, and the Charity which they owe him; because they refuse to bear with his Infirmities, and by condemning him, hinder his being freed from Error, and hearkening to the Truth. (3.) From thence it follows that they offer an Affront to the Divine Truth, in resisting its Efficacy and quenching of Prophecies, as we have elsewhere shewn. (4.) They offend very heinously against all those Precepts throughout the New Testament concerning Charity, Brotherly Love, and following Peace with all Men. (5.) And lastly, unless this mutual Toleration of Dissenters were allowed of, the Church, which is the Body of Christ, must of necessity be rent and divided into Parties.

To this our Doctrine many things are usually urg'd by the Enemies of Peace and Christian Toleration. *Objections answer'd.* And, (1.) They heap up a great many Texts of Scripture, wherein we are commanded to beware of false Prophets and Teachers; to pronounce an Anathema against those who preach any other Gospel than what is preached, nay tho it were an Angel from Heaven; to depart from those who do not hold fast the sound Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to the Gospel; and not to bid him God-speed who does not bring this Doctrine along with him'. *Ansiv.* 'Tis evident that all these Places do treat of such Persons as reject the very Foundation of Salvation, and are the Destroyers of Godliness, whom we also would have expell'd the Church: For it cannot be said of those who strictly adhere to the Foundation of their Salvation Jesus Christ, and only err in things not fundamental, that they are false Prophets, preach another Gospel, or hold not the Form of sound Words. The most that can be said of them, is, that they do not fully and truly apprehend the Meaning of some Words of our Saviour, which however they embrace with a sincere and obsequious Faith; and that they render the way to Eternal Salvation more difficult to themselves, but not unpassable.

Secondly, 'tis objected, that St. Paul says, 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers:*

'Mat. 7.
15. Acts
20. 29, 30,
31. Gal.
1. 8.
1 Tim. 6.
3, 4, 5.
2 John
ver. 10,
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vers: for what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? And what Communion hath Light with Darkness? And what Concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an Infidel? Answ. The very citing of this Text is enough to refute the Argument taken from it: For we are not for maintaining Peace with Infidels, but with Believers, tho tainted with some Error in Doctrines not absolutely necessary. Now who, without the highest Injustice, can call Error Unrighteousness or Infidelity? Who, but one averse to all Peace, will stile an erroneous Person, not departing from the Foundation, *Belial*?

Again they produce the Words of the same Apostle, Rom. 16. 17. *I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.* Answ. Not he who dissents from another by a simple Error of the Mind, is to be said to cause Divisions and Offences contrary to the Apostolical Doctrine: but he who converts things not necessary, preach'd by the Apostles, into things necessary, or desires to tie up others to the Sense he gives of the Apostles Words; and upon the account of a disagreement in Matters of less moment, causes a Schism in the Church. For the Apostle does not here treat of a bare Dissent, which may be innocent, but of a Disagreement of Minds, or *διχογνωμία*, which, Gal. 5. 20. is expressly stil'd a Work of the Flesh; and of a manifest swerving from the Apostolical Doctrine, by denying that to be true which the Apostles press'd as true and necessary. Of this number were the unbelieving *Jews*, who denied that *Jesus* was the Christ, teaching that a Man was justified not by Faith, but by the Works of the Law; and those false Brethren who were for joining *Moses* with Christ. With greater reason then may we infer, that we ought to avoid those who cause a Schism upon the account of Errors not fundamental, and cast their dissenting Brethren out of the Church.

Fourthly, they argue thus: This Toleration is absurd, and repugnant to the Precept of the Apostle, because it is required that it should be mutual, whereas the Apostle enjoins that the stronger should bear with the Infirmities of the Weak'. But in a mutual Toleration

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ration not only the Strong bears with the Weak, but the Weak must of necessity also bear with the Strong; which is very absurd. Add to this, that the Strong needs no Toleration, and the Weak wants the Power to bear with any one. The Reply to this is very easy: For tho one only is really strong, since only one of two contradictory Opinions can be true; yet both of them in their own Opinion is strong, since each thinks that he has the Truth on his side; and both of them in each other's Opinion is weak. Now the Judgment of Conscience ought to be the Rule of our Actions: Since therefore both of them supposes that the Truth is on his side, and that he is strong, 'tis necessary, according to the Apostle's Rule, that each of them should bear with one another. Nay, the stronger any one is, and the more confident he is that he is in the right, the more is it his Duty to indulge the Weak, and bear with those who in his opinion are in an Error.

Fifthly, they add, that this Toleration is unjust, because Truth ought to be its Attendant. *Answ.* 'Tis certain there can be no Peace or Toleration grateful to God, without the saving Truth; we do not desire therefore that it should be extended any farther than to those who agree in the Fundamental Truth: but it is not requisite that this Consent should be universal, so that all should think and speak the same things. For what Toleration can there be where there is nothing to be tolerated? Again, this Condition is morally impossible; but to allow of Toleration under an impossible Condition, is wholly to reject it. A Consent there may be in Fundamentals, and if we are satisfied therewith, Peace may be preserved in the Church; and if lost, may be restor'd by Toleration. Again, the very end of Toleration is the Truth: For the true Method of reclaiming a Man from an Error is not to expel him out of the Church with scorn and contempt, as an Enemy, but by treating him kindly and friendly as a Brother, to dispose him upon the Evidence of Arguments to embrace the Truth. For what wise Father, or prudent Friend will hope to reduce his erroneous Son or Brother into the right Way, by thrusting him rudely out of his House? The Make of all Men is such,

that they can be won, but not forc'd; they desire to be led, and not driven out of an Error.

Sixthly, they object, that by this means all Errors and Heresies will be tolerated in the Church. *Ans.*

(1.) 'Tis not our business to exclude out of our Communion, those whom the Scripture does not exclude out of the Kingdom of Heaven. (2.) The Errors which the Scripture does not condemn as damnable, ought not to be call'd Heresies. (3.) That Man who has a due Reverence for the Scriptures, and looks upon them as the only Rule of Faith, clearly and fully containing all things necessary to Salvation, and desires to admit of nothing as fundamental, but what may be clearly maintained and demonstrated to be such by Scripture, will not easily fall into such damnable Errors as are destructive of Faith. (4.) And lastly, 'tis more tolerable to be infected with an Error that is not damnable, than to make an unnecessary Truth the pretence of a Schism: For if we err, provided the Fundamentals of our Salvation be sound, and we want not Piety, we may be saved; but if we want Charity, tho we had all Faith, it will profit us nothing, *1 Cor. 13. 2.*

Seventhly they object, that whatsoever is requir'd as absolutely necessary to Salvation, is not sufficient for the maintaining of Ecclesiastical Communion: since a Distinction ought to be made between Fundamentals necessary to Salvation, or to Faith, or to Church-Communion. That is fundamental to Salvation, without which a Man cannot be saved: That to Faith, which is absolutely requisite for the entertaining the Force, and the Profession thereof: And that to the Church, which the Peace and Welfare of its present Constitution requires. Now it sometimes comes to pass, that an Error is fundamental with respect to the Church, *i. e.* cannot be tolerated therein with edification, and yet the erroneous Person cannot be pronounced an Infidel, or one that is wholly destitute of Faith, and excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven. Again, for the conceiving and cherishing of Faith, many things are commonly required, such as the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, and other holy Doctrines; but these things are not all of them equally and alike necessary. *Ans.* (1.) In the general we say, that it may

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may sometimes happen that Disputations cannot be tolerated in the Church: Not because they are about a Doctrine necessary to Salvation, but because they are of no moment for the Confirmation of the Faith, or the promoting of Piety, and consequently are of no avail to Salvation: It belongs therefore to them, to whom the Care and Government of the Church is committed, to expel such Disputes out of the Church; being such as the Apostle bids us avoid, 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. *Tit.* 3. 9. They are driven out of the Church, not because they are fundamental to Ecclesiastical Communion, but because they have no manner of relation to the Foundation, and are productive of a contentious Spirit, which is wholly averse to the Peace of the Church. (2.) More particularly we say, that this Distinction seems to us wholly unreasonable, and directly repugnant to the Scripture: For what are those Fundamentals to Faith, which are not Fundamentals to Salvation; since Faith is a Condition absolutely necessary thereto? Whatsoever then is fundamental to Faith, is likewise fundamental to Salvation. (3.) We farther add, that things necessary to Faith are the only things necessary to Church-Communion; because it is not lawful for us to drive those out of our Communion, whom we believe to be endued with a saving Faith.

Eighthly, they object, that such a Toleration is impossible. *Ans.* (1.) That it is not impossible, the very Church of *Rome* informs us, wherein almost the same Controversies prevail as among the Reformed: and they are kept from breaking out into an open Schism by the sole Authority of the Pope. If the Reformed bore the same respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, as the *Papists* do to the Pope; to that Jesus, I say, who recommends Peace and Charity as the Characteristical Mark by which his genuine Disciples might be known; why might they not maintain the same, nay, a stricter and sincerer Peace with one another, not out of a fear of some human Punishment, or constrain'd thereto by Force, as the *Papists* are, but freely and willingly, that they might please their great Master, and shew themselves to be the genuine Sons of the God of Peace, and the true Disciples of the Prince of Peace? (2.) We own it to be impossible, so long as those who have

Authority in the Church are against it, and hinder all the Counsels that make for Peace. But to what purpose have we been urging these things, besides the bringing them to a better Mind, and a calmer Disposition? If the World be so bad as to refuse a saving Remedy when offered to it, 'tis enough for us that we have discharged our Duty, and contributed what in us lies towards Peace and Union. But we shall in the next Section evince the Possibility of such a Toleration.

Lastly, 'tis urg'd, that by such a Toleration downright Scepticism will be introduc'd, and there will be nothing certain in Religion. *Ans.* We cannot but wonder at such an Objection; since we were before so careful in distinguishing between Doctrines of less moment, useful, and necessary. Whatsoever is not absolutely necessary to Salvation, does not immediately become indifferent. Many things are of great use for the attaining of Salvation, which however if we want, we are not presently to conclude that we are lost: Other things are prejudicial to the promoting of Piety, and the obtaining eternal Life, but do not wholly hinder the Acquisition thereof. Many things are required for the comfortable Subsistence of a Man in this World, which are not absolutely necessary for the Support of Life it self: Many things are prejudicial to Health, which yet do not presently bring Death along with them. As therefore no Man will call those things indifferent, which are repugnant to his Health, tho they are not mortal; so neither will any one call those Errors indifferent, which render the attaining Salvation more difficult, tho they do not absolutely cut off all Hopes of it. And as it is the part of a prudent Physician, to apply Remedies to Distempers that are not deadly, lest they should at last become such: So it is the Duty of a Christian, to use his Endeavours, and to spare no Pains in refuting of dangerous Errors, lest at length the Faith should wholly be corrupted, and Piety destroyed by them. However, he is obliged not to transgress the Bounds of Christian Moderation, but to tolerate the Erroneous as long as they err, that so they may with Meekness be reduced from the Error of their ways.

S E C T. III.

By what Method this Toleration may be maintained, saving to everyone the Liberty of Propheſying; and how notwithstanding all Confuſion may be avoided, and the Truth preſerved in the Church.

This is the laſt thing we propos'd to conſider: And IV. *The* 'tis confeſs'd on all hands, that a certain Liberty of manner of Propheſying, without prejudicing the Bond of Chriſtian Charity, ought to be in the Church; for Truth *maintain-* ing this Toleration. is no where more conſpicuous, than when an accurate *The Liberty of propheſying.* Search is made after it; and no where more obſcured, than where a free Enquiry after it is denied, as is to be ſeen in the preſent Church of Rome. For who will be ſo arrogant to pretend, that he alone knows all things? This is to make himſelf more than a Man, God has diſtributed his Gifts to different Perſons, and has not granted all of them to one ſingle Perſon: whatſoever therefore is obſcure to one, is revealed to another. That therefore this Knowledge may be communicated to all, and the Truth be propagated, and ſupported by more ſolid Arguments, a Liberty of Propheſying ought to be allowed.

But that we may the more diſtinctly treat of theſe matters, 'tis to be conſidered; Firſt, how this Liberty *Two things conſiderable therein.* is to be granted in thoſe Churches that are not in a State of Separation, without prejudicing the Chriſtian Peace and Union. Secondly, how Churches that are ſeparated may agree in mutual Communion, ſaving to every Man the Liberty of profeſſing and maintaining his own Opinion.

As to the firſt of theſe Points, we ought to beware, leſt under the ſpecious Pretence of the Liberty of propheſying, we take the Licence of calling every thing into queſtion. In the firſt place then, we would have the Fundamentals of Salvation to remain fix'd and immovable; and that if any one ſhould deny or call them into queſtion, he is not to be heard nor tolerated. And on the other hand, we ought not too ſtiſly to contend concerning matters of ſmall moment, and of no uſe either to Piety or Salvation; ſince they

1. How it ought to be granted to Churches not ſeparated.

breed Contentions, and make a Man more zealous for his own, than for the Glory of God.

What Prudence is here required.

Secondly, we ought to proceed with the highest Prudence and Moderation of Mind : For since we are not rashly to fall upon refuting a Doctrine, already received by the publick Consent of the Church of which we are Members; no more does it become us to be Slaves to the Decrees of other Men, as subject to Error as our selves, but we must always be going forward in the search of Truth : And every one who is a Lover of Divine Truth and the Peace of the Church, laying aside all Prejudice and Passion, ought to consider in the Fear of the Lord the weight and moment of a Doctrine, concerning the Falsity of which he is persuaded by manifest Arguments. If he finds that 'tis not of any great moment, or but of little advantage to Piety, as all External and purely Speculative things are; he ought to connive at it, and not to bring the Peace of the Church into danger for so small a matter. If it should happen to be of greater Concern, yet we ought not to be too hasty in the publick Refutation thereof: not unless we had a private Conference with pious and learned Men, to see if we could receive any Satisfaction from them, or convince them of an Error; lest through Arrogance or Rashness we should commit any thing, which it is not afterwards in our power to correct.

Even with respect to the Auditors.

But this Prudence teaches us to have a particular regard to the Auditors, before whom the Enquiry after Truth is made. There are many things subtilly disputed of in the Schools, and with some Advantage, which cannot be delivered from the Pulpit before a mix'd Congregation, without the greatest disadvantage to the Church. It is the Duty of a Doctor of the Church to perform the Office of a prudent and skilful Physician, who not only considers the Nature of the Disease, and the Virtues of his Medicines, but especially the Constitution of his Patient. In the Matter of Religion some are like Children, others like grown up Persons, who have their Senses exercised to discern between Good and Evil; the one are to be fed with Milk, the other with Meats. Nay perhaps 'tis better not to say any thing at all of those controverted

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ted Points in the Church, but to discourse of them calmly in lesser Assemblies before those who are more experienc'd than others, or at least by common Consent to set Limits and Bounds to their Disputes.

But these and many other things which ought to be observ'd with respect to the lawful Limitation of this Liberty, may I think be comprehended under this one most equitable Law of Nature written in all our Hearts; *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, even so do unto them; and whatsoever ye would not that Men should do unto you, do not unto them.* For 'tis highly reasonable that we should be under the Obligation of the same Law, which we would have prescribed to others; and not to load others with those Chains which we our selves are unwilling to bear. If Men keep within these Bounds, their Liberty will not degenerate into Licentiousness, nor will Tyranny destroy their Liberty. For if any Man should embrace a Doctrine for true which is different from the receiv'd Doctrine of the Church, then the Advocate for the Church will consider how much Liberty he must allow to the other of maintaining and defending the Doctrine which he looks upon to be true; and ought not to assume a greater Liberty to himself. If therefore he should think it reasonable, for the preservation of the Peace of the Church, that the other should say nothing of that Doctrine, he ought also to injoin Silence to himself. On the other hand, should it happen, that another should dissent from the common Doctrine of the Church, he will consider how much Liberty he would desire (were he of his opinion) of proposing and maintaining his Tenets, and will grant the same to his dissenting Brother, without any Violation of the Peace of the Church.

As for our parts, we have not departed from those just and natural Laws in that famous Controversy concerning Predestination between us and the *Remonstrants*, but have nicely and strictly observ'd all those things that are necessary to preserve the Peace of the Church in Truth. For, (1.) Ours was no new Doctrine, but unanimously deliver'd by the Fathers in the Primitive Church, and at the dawning of the Reformation entertain'd by many Divines of no small

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Prede-
stination.*

Note. (2.) Nor was it a Controversy concerning a Doctrine of little use or small moment, but which diffus'd its Branches through many parts of Divinity, and very nearly concern'd the Necessity and Usefulness of Piety. (3.) Nor did the *Remonstrants* rashly and hastily testify their Dissent before the People: But *Arminius* at first had a private Conference with *Junius*, and afterwards mov'd by the Surmises of others, they were forc'd to give a fuller Explanation of their Opinion. (4.) They did not voluntarily depart from the *Contra-Remonstrants*, but they propos'd a mutual Toleration, and offer'd to keep within certain Bounds in their Disputes; and at last were excommunicated by the *Contra-Remonstrants*. But why should we search into the Causes of that Schism? Let us rather enquire after such Remedies as are proper for the healing not only of that, but all other Schisms.

2. How
Churches
in a State
of Separation
are to
be reunited.

Let us therefore examine, secondly, how, by a mutual Toleration, Peace and Union may be restor'd between Churches that are already separated, saving a Liberty to each of them of professing and maintaining their own Opinion. The Degrees of Union are various, one more perfect than another. The most perfect Union of all is that, whereby all the Members testify their Communion and Brotherhood by participating of one and the same Supper, without any Difference of the Teachers or Doctrine; but this is such a State, as is rather to be wish'd than hop'd for. There is therefore another inferior Degree of it, by which they who agree in the Fundamentals of Salvation do testify their Union by the Celebration of the same Lord's Supper in one and the same Church, notwithstanding their Diffension in Points not Fundamental. There is still a more imperfect Union, call'd by others an Association, by which two or more Churches do not mutually damn one another for their difference in Opinions, but bear a mutual Affection and Respect for one another; nor do they from hence deny Communion to the Worthy, who seek it in the Use of the Word and Sacraments. This last only is what some are for; and truly this is the easiest to be attain'd, and seems sufficient to take away the Censures and Anathemas which Christians cast upon one another. But as for my

part,

part, as I think we ought indeed to begin there, so I see no reason why we should stick there, and not rather go a step farther towards a more close Communion. Not that I approve of a Confusion of Doctrines, or general Confessions conceiv'd in ambiguous Terms, which both Parties may bring over to their own respective Opinions, and adapt to the maintaining of their own Tenets: But this I say, notwithstanding this Difference of Opinions, which both Parties own, a Consent in Fundamentals is enough to establish a brotherly Union.

That therefore such an Union may be obtain'd, 'tis *By what* my opinion that we ought to proceed gradually; for *degrees to* just as Schisms arise in the Church, so I think they are *be attain'd.* best remov'd, inverting the Order. Churches are not divided into Parties on the sudden and at one stroke, but the Causes of Schisms rise up by degrees, from whence, when they are come to Maturity, Schism proceeds. Upon the starting of a Controversy about any point of Religion, the Heat of disputing inflames the Minds of each Party: In this Heat one represents the Opinion of the other with *Odium*, and loads it with absurd Consequences. Hence proceed Heart-burnings and Enmities, and at last the Churches are rent into Parties. After the same manner ought the separated Churches to endeavour after an Union. In the first place, Hatred and Animosity, the Causes of Schism, ought to be extirpated, and mutual Declarations made, that notwithstanding the Difference in Opinions, one esteems the other for Brethren in Christ, and Heirs of Eternal Life: and thus when Charity is once restor'd, the Way to Peace is laid open. Then the Teachers, together with the Members of both Churches, may alternately go to hear one another's Sermons; or at least such a Liberty ought to be allow'd them, without the fear of any Ecclesiastical Censure. And that no Person may be deter'd from hearing the Sermons of another Church, all possible care ought to be taken that no Controversies be brought into the publick Preachings, unless manag'd with the greatest Moderation and Charity to those who dissent from them. To this end they should seldom treat on such Texts, whereby any controverted Points may be either established

established or supported. And when the Occasion requires a Man should handle such Texts, for the avoiding of all Offences let every Man deliver his own Meaning of them, which he thinks to be the true and genuine Sense, without refuting the contrary Opinion, or loading it with absurd Consequences; much less ought he to charge those Consequences upon the other as his Opinion. Thus the Minds of both Parties being prepar'd, and all Animosities laid aside, the Members and Ministers of both Churches will alternately come to the Communion of the Lord's Supper, and testify their Union by this Symbol of Christian Charity. By this means, tho they are two distinct Churches, yet they are not properly divided; and their Hearts being united in mutual Love, they may easily unite into one Body of the Church.

*Another
Method of
Union.*

If any one should think that this cannot be easily effected, we have still another Method for re-uniting of separated Churches to propose, which is this: That particular Churches, as they are at present distinct, be each of them taught by their own Ministers; and be instructed not only in the fundamental Truth, but also in other even controverted Points: and some common Church be erected by all, or some common and universal Temple, wherein all may meet for the sake of testifying their Communion. In which Temple, no Controversies, but only things necessary to Salvation (wherein all agree) should be taught: and the Lord's Supper should be administred to all Christians, without any mention of the Controversies on foot. By this means Peace would be maintain'd, and every Man in his own particular Church might be inform'd in a Truth, even not altogether necessary to Salvation.

*What is to
be done for
the obtain-
ing of Uni-
on.*

That therefore this Union may be obtain'd, and Peace when once made may be perpetual, these things are requisite: (1.) All Decisions, by which Doctrines not clearly express'd in Scripture are determin'd to be necessary, must be abrogated, or at least not urg'd as Decrees which every Man is oblig'd to stand to. (2.) No Forms of Expression ought to be urg'd as necessary, which are not contain'd in Sacred Writ, under what pretence soever invented. For this is an
Affront

Affront to the Holy Ghost, and an Injury offer'd to Liberty of Conscience. (3.) And lastly, we must return to that antient Simplicity which prevail'd in the Primitive Church: For then there were not so many Articles requir'd to be believ'd, as there are at present, but only Faith in Jesus Christ; as is evident from the Answer *Peter* made to our Saviour, the Eucharist to *Philip*, and the Qualification which *Paul* and *Silas* requir'd of the converted *Jaylor*. Mat. 16.
16, 17.
Acts 8.
37.
Acts 16,
30, 31.

And this is that mutual Toleration which we propose to all Christian Churches, who agree in the Fundamentals of Faith; tho they do dissent from one another in Points not fundamental: And may the God of *Patience and Consolation* grant us to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus: that we may with one Mind and one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore let us also receive one another, as Christ also received us to the Glory of God. We shall conclude all with that Angelick Eucharistical and Pacifick Hymn; **G L O R Y
T O G O D I N T H E H I G H E S T, P E A C E
U P O N E A R T H, G O O D W I L L T O
W A R D S M E N.**

T H E E N D.

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